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★ THE ULTIMATE MUSIC MAGAZINE

HER SEXIEST PICTURES EVER!

CHRISTINA AGUILERA

This Genie Is Definitely Out of Her Bottle >>>>>



SUM 41

Booze! Brawls! Boobies!

NIRVANA'S GREATEST HITS



THE
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ALBUMS
OF 2002

PLUS
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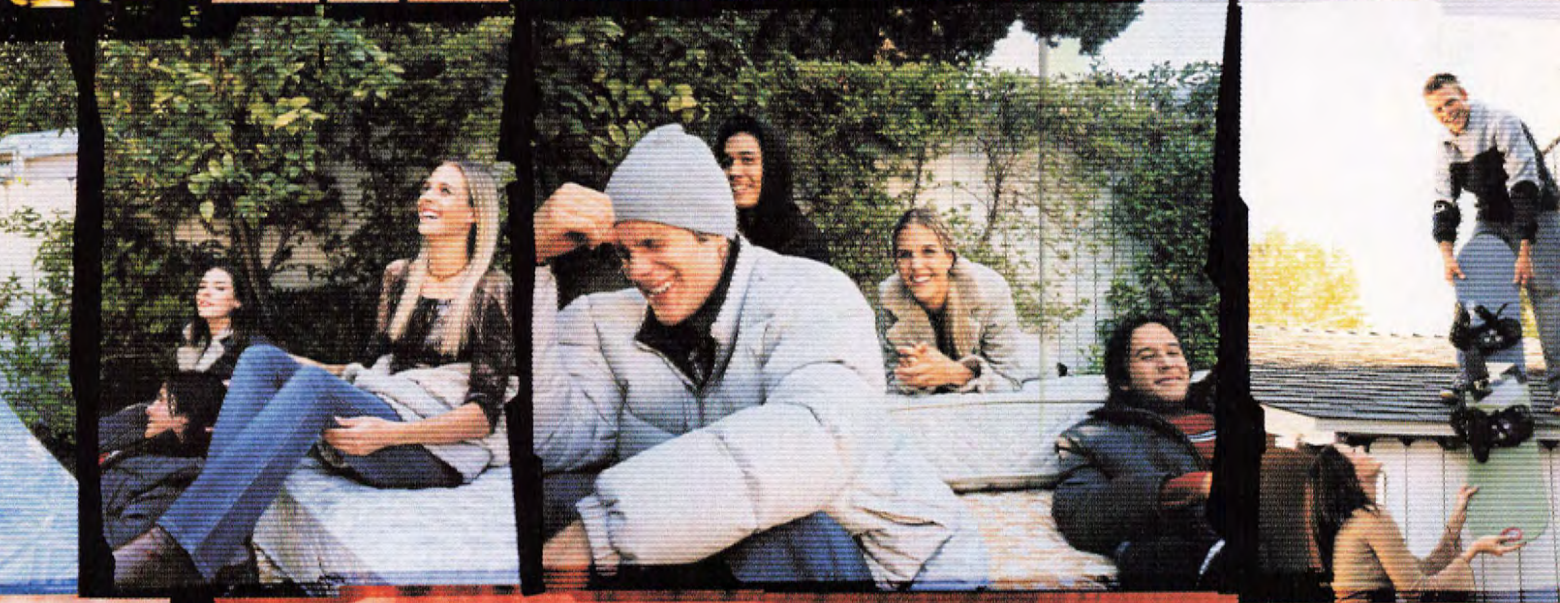
A man with dark hair and a serious expression stands in a parking garage. He is wearing a dark blue t-shirt with a small yellow logo on the chest and low-rise blue jeans. His arms are crossed, and he is looking off to the side. The background is a dimly lit parking garage with blurred lights. The rear of a dark car is visible in the lower right corner.

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62 SUM 41

Between rounds of high-octane cocktails and threats to paint a Manhattan cab with puke, Canadian pop-punkers Sum 41 are busy kicking their new album out the door and saving rock & roll with the power of obnoxiousness. "Being a brat is a liberating experience!" they squeak.

68 TONI BRAXTON

The R&B queen discusses her new album, her bounce back from bankruptcy and the alleged failure of her implants. "Nothing exploded! And anyway, it was saline, not silicone." Oh...

70 33 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CARLOS SANTANA

He watched his guitar dance like a snake at Woodstock. He knows the songs that make female dancers strip. He gets his tennis tips from John McEnroe. And 30 more incredible facts.

76 PEARL JAM

They've gone from being the biggest band in the world at the peak of grungemania to being... survivors. The release of their new album, *Riot Act*, finds Eddie Vedder in a strange state: He's actually happy. Who knew?

82 GIRL-GROUP GOMORRAH!

Lisa Lopes torches her boyfriend's house. The Shangri-Las try their hand at kidnapping. The Runaways cause men to masturbate. And don't even get us started on the Go-Go's...

90 MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER

It's always Christmas Eve in Omaha, Nebraska, where Chip Davis, founder of New Age perennial Mannheim Steamroller, runs a multimillion-dollar business selling candles, tea and twinkly music to your great-aunt. And no, he cannot be stopped.

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A cheap-ass plasma TV. A big-ass MP3 system. A kick-ass geetar. All the new toys you're praying to see under the tree.

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You've got your Beck, you've got your Clipse, you've got your Hives and you've got your Nelly. OK, no more hints!

124 CHRISTINA AGUILERA

Pierced nipples? Talk about a 180! Christina Aguilera's new album, *Stripped*, faces down a childhood scarred by abuse and gives the finger to all those who have pissed her off: former managers, former boyfriends and a former pop star named... Christina.

ON THE COVER >>>>



PHOTOGRAPHY FRANK OCKENFELS 3

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What sucks is I always go for the guys who can't deal with the pressure of dating someone like me.

CHRISTINA AGUILERA, p124

BRA AND PANTIES BY
AGENT PROVOCATEUR
BOOTS BY CHRISTIAN DIOR



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T O M M Y

J E A N S

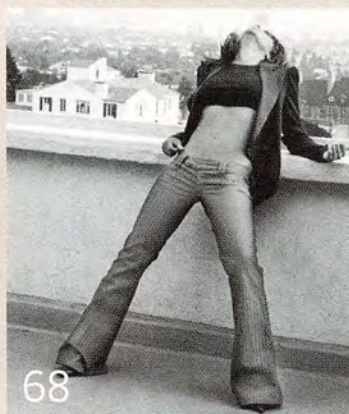


Actually, I'm proud of how I behaved last night. I restrained myself.

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Led Zeppelin's lineup that wasn't, Eddie Vedder's life preserver, G.G. Allin's disgusting death and more.

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It took a few tragedies to immortalize Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Free Bird."

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Justin Timberlake owns 800 pairs of sneakers. He puts his money on 'N Sync's Chris Kirkpatrick in a punch-up with Eminem. And ladies, take note: He's an "ass man"...

192 WHO DOES KELLY CLARKSON THINK SHE IS?

She's the *American Idol* champion who doesn't swear, won't drink, frets about her big butt and prefers not to have on underwear. "I am commando girl," she confides. Yes!

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In the home stretch as Minnesota's rebellious governor, Jesse Ventura is running against the wind and rockin' out to Hendrix and Zeppelin — and mix tapes made by Hunter Thompson.

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CONTRIBUTORS

John Atilewood, Judson Baker, Johnny Black, D.J. Century, Danny Clinch, Scott DeSimon, Adrian Deevo, Matt Diehl, Paul Du Noyer, Nick Duerden, Jason Gay, Daniel Hansen, John Harris, Adam Higginbotham, Ted Lambert, Michael Lavine, Michael Leonard, Steve Lowe, Dorian Lynskey, Robert Maxwell, Ben Mitchell, John Mullen, Steve Myers, Sheryl Nields, Frank Ockenfels 3, Michael Odell, John Perry, Alexis Petridis, Neal Pollack, Alex Porter, David Quantick, Brendan Quigley, Rankin, David Rees, Jeffrey Rotter, F. Scott Schafer, William Shaw, Jonathan Small, Neil Strauss, Phil Sutcliffe, Kyle Swenson, Chris Varas, John Walsh, Douglas Wolk

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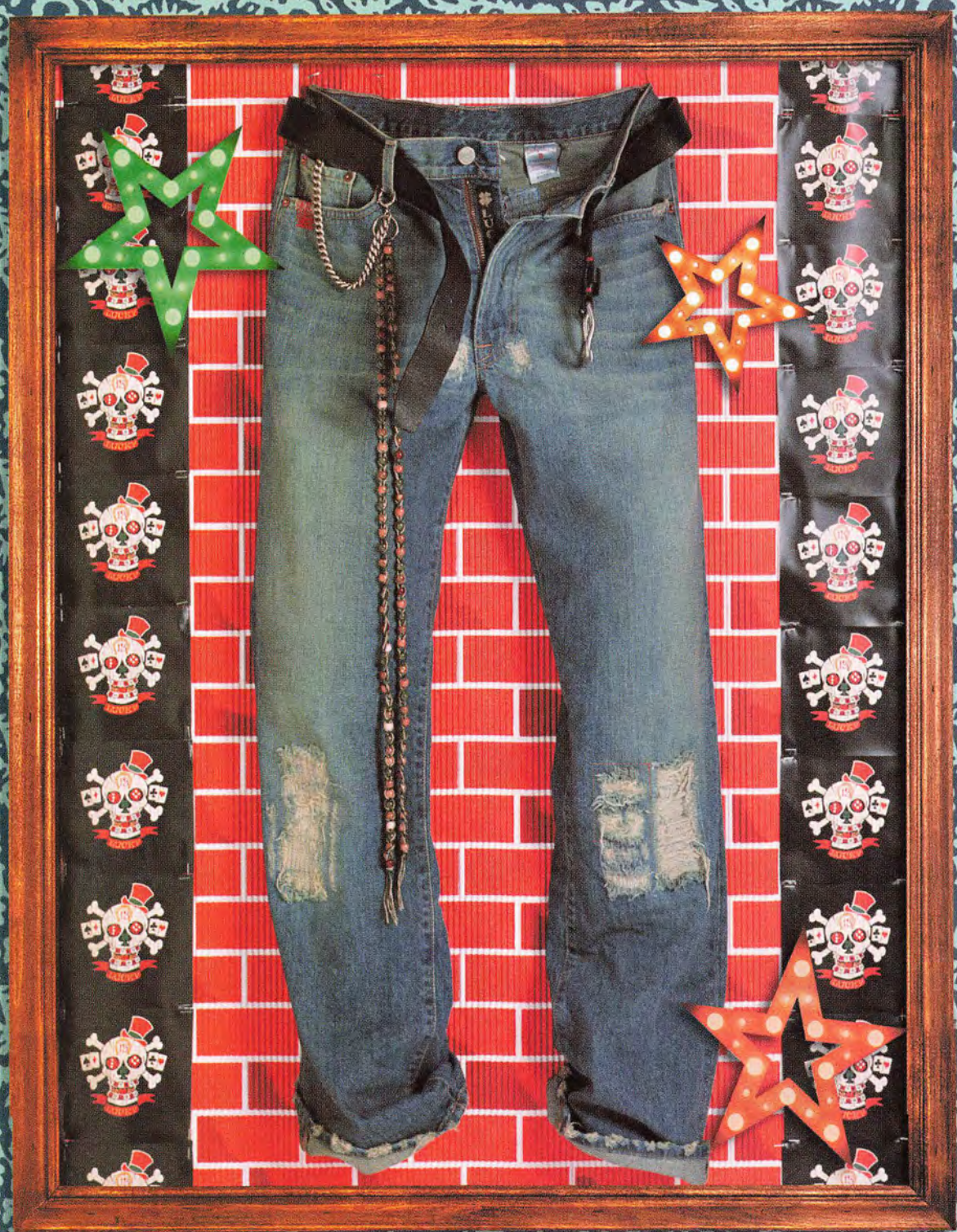
Publisher **Malcolm Campbell** (212) 372-3886
Associate Publisher **Jason Wagenheim** (212) 372-3850
Advertising Director **Suzanne Lang** (212) 372-3898
Senior Account Manager **Christina Helms** (212) 372-8673
Account Manager **Ezra Lunde** (212) 372-8653
Account Manager **Loren Pransky** (646) 827-7250
Midwest Director **Kate Dixon** (312) 440-6901
Detroit Director **Nan Gerard** (248) 723-1302
Southern California Account Manager **Kelly Watson** (310) 664-0368
Northwest Account Manager **Liz Gray** (415) 749-0280
Florida Manager **MPR** (305) 856-8326
Associate Marketing Director **Andrea Parr**
Public Relations **Four Corners Communications** (212) 849-8250
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Executive Assistant to the President **Suzanne Price**
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Hookers N' Blow: the next Beatles? No.

➤ LOOKING THROUGH this issue's features on Pearl Jam, 'N Sync's Justin Timberlake and Mannheim Steamroller, it's hard not to notice how many hugely successful acts have colossally stupid names. Even the Beatles' name was as cheesy as a slice of moldy English cheddar. Not only were they named after Lee Marvin's stupid motorcycle gang in *The Wild One*, but then John Lennon decided to add the stupid *A* in the middle.

"But wait," I can almost hear you mutter, "what does this guy know about band names anyway?" The answer, of course, is absolutely nothing — as became abundantly clear this week when the time came to name *Blender's* house band.

Before you ask: No, we're not very good. But the real problem has been finding a suitable moniker for audiences to place in front of "... you suck!" Indeed, many people believe choosing a band name is the most important moment in a young act's career. The wrong decision can lead to a life of

misery and failure (where are Wa Wa Nee now?), while the right one propels you to unimaginable riches and intimate relations with well-proportioned members of the opposite sex.

For some reason, my suggestion to call the band the Andy Pemberton Experience was rebuffed by my band-mates. Then we thought about calling ourselves the Gabetones, in honor of our charismatic lead singer and researcher, Gabe Soria. But when one staffer misheard it as the Grape Turds, we decided to think again. Friday Chicken, the Hacks, Mutton and the Reach-arounds were also dismissed. We spent two days as Raw Meat until we felt peculiar. The Todd Pruzans was considered a winner until our senior editor Todd Pruzan objected.

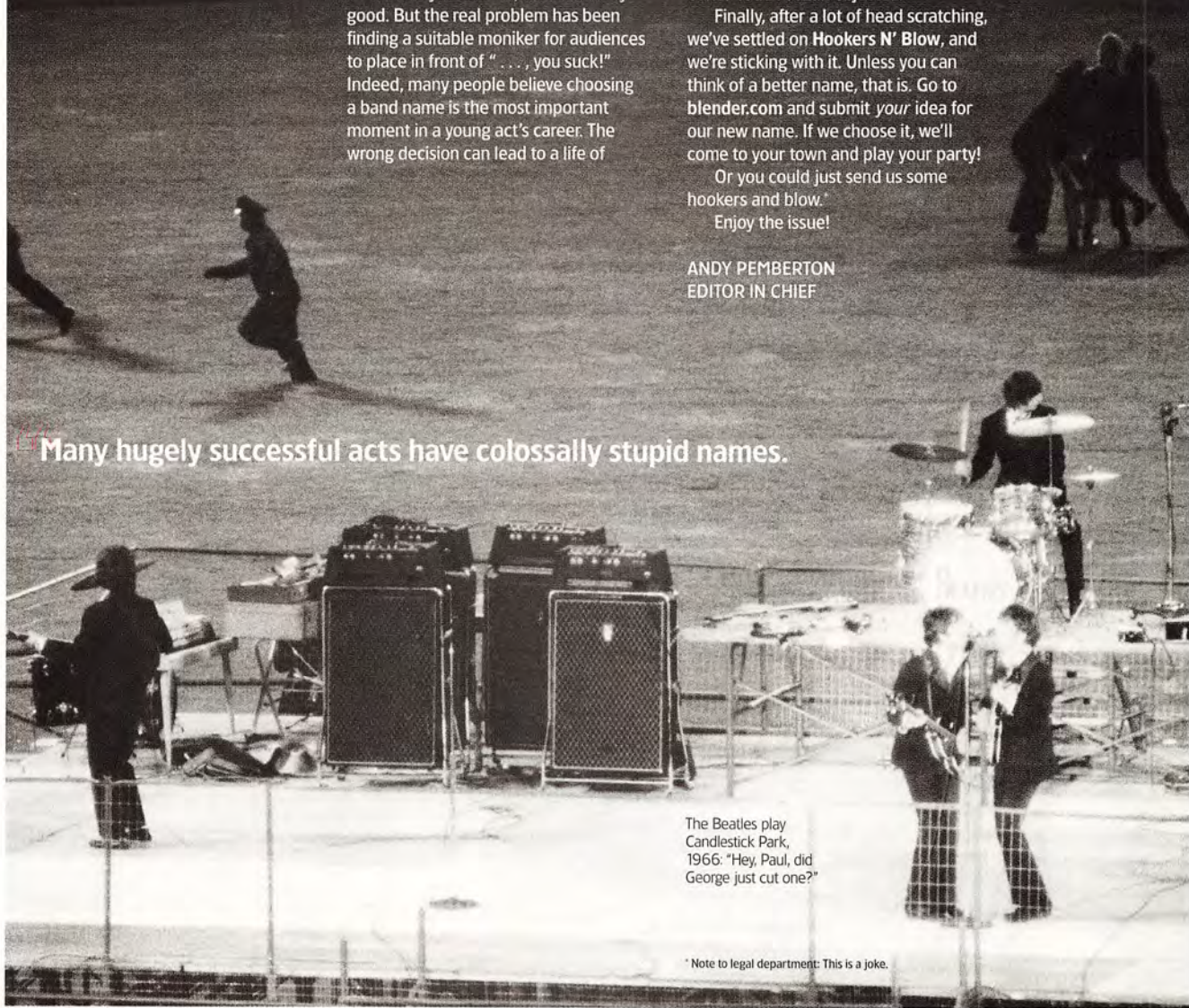
Finally, after a lot of head scratching, we've settled on *Hookers N' Blow*, and we're sticking with it. Unless you can think of a better name, that is. Go to blender.com and submit *your* idea for our new name. If we choose it, we'll come to your town and play your party!

Or you could just send us some hookers and blow.*

Enjoy the issue!

ANDY PEMBERTON
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Many hugely successful acts have colossally stupid names.

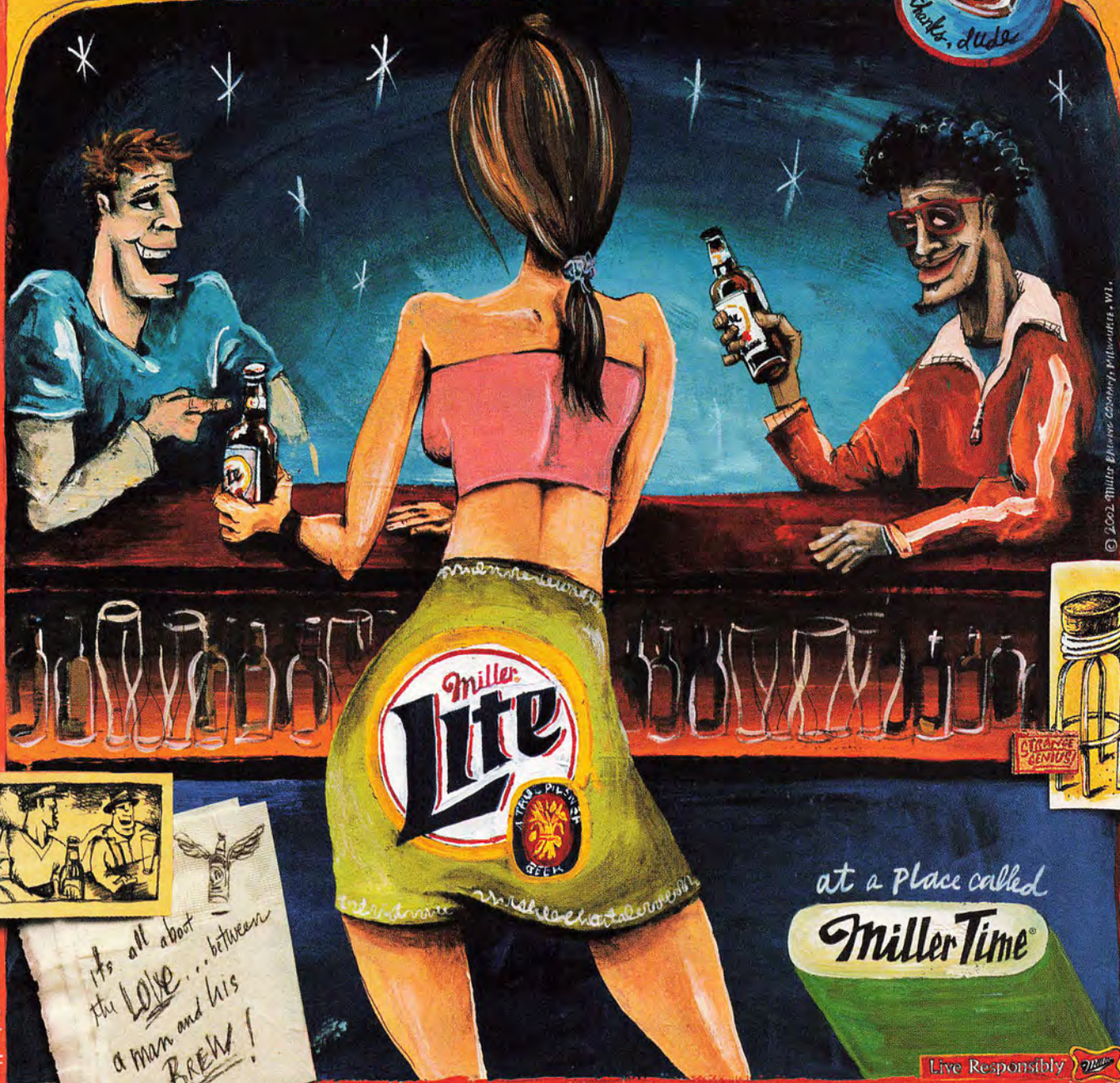


The Beatles play
Candlestick Park,
1966: "Hey, Paul, did
George just cut one?"

* Note to legal department: This is a joke.

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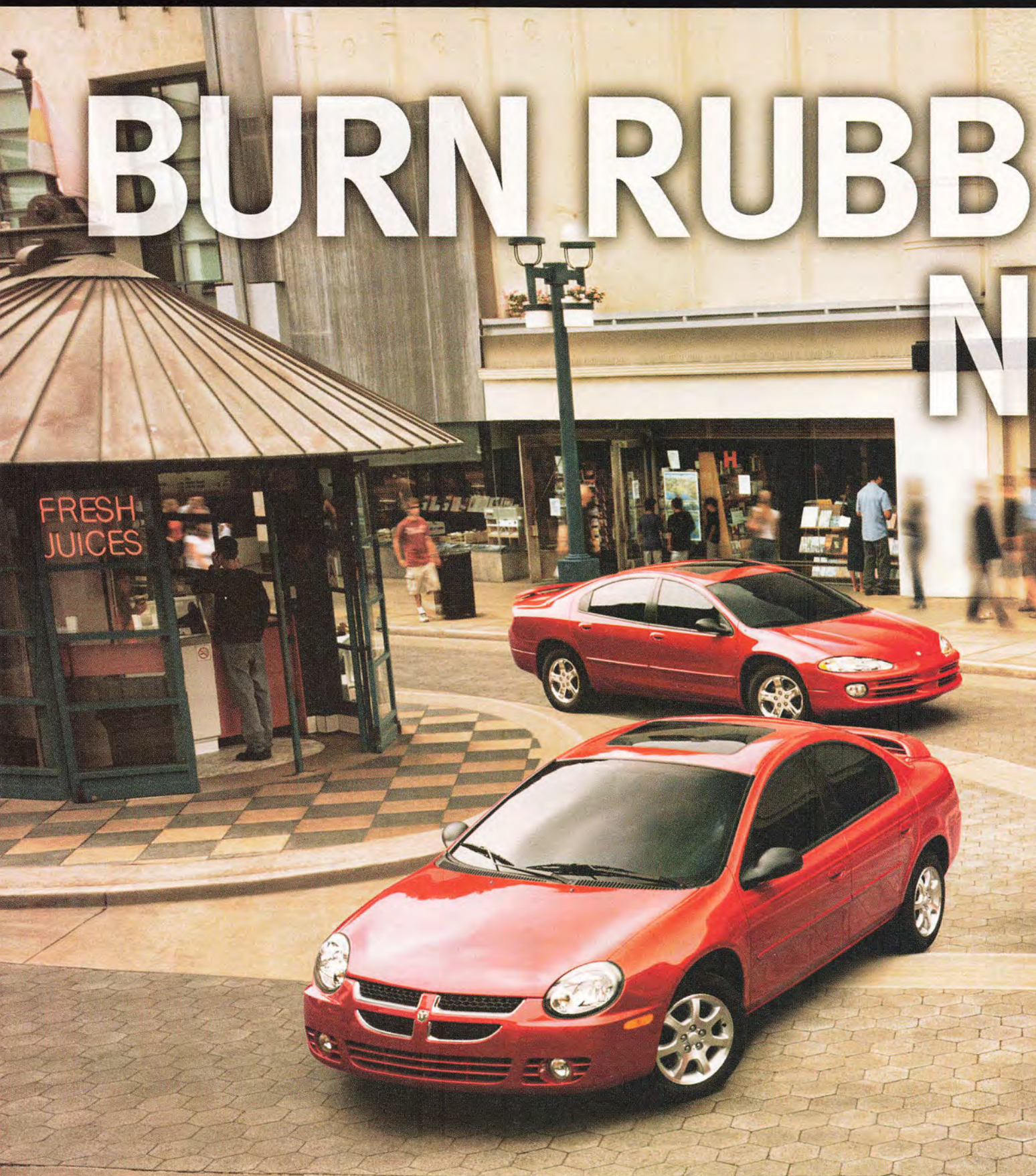
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SPINE-TINGLING!

I was stunned and excited to see a lyric from "Goodnight Irene" ("Goodnight Irene, goodnight Irene/I'll see you in my dreams") on the spine of your October issue, because it's such an old song. How do you decide which lyric gets put there, and which one goes upside-down on the last page of each issue?

JUSTIN WALTER, OMAHA, NEBRASKA

The spine lyric is *Blender's* tip of the hat each month to one of music's recently departed. In the case of "Irene," it's legendary folk music collector Alan Lomax, who died in July. As for the upside-down message . . . we could tell you, but then we'd have to kill you. And we only recently got the stains out from the last time we had to do that.

JACKSON IS A STINKER!

After reading John Connolly's piece about Michael Jackson ["Why Is Michael Jackson Waving This Sign Around? Is It Because He's Broke?", November], I am disgusted with the infamous "King of Pop" . . . and impressed with the informed *Blender* staff. I had no idea he was so far in over his head financially, or that his motives for his Sony/Tommy Mottola protests in New York this summer were so selfish, or, frankly, that he was so wacko. Thank you for educating me. Your in-depth and serious reporting resulted in one of your best articles to date.

ANNA ROBINSON, ASTORIA, NEW YORK

★ Congratulations to the winner of *Blender's* September crossword puzzle, who walks away with a shiny new Microsoft Xbox game system: Adam Comstock of Royal Oak, Michigan. Sweet!

ROBERT WILLIAMS? NO!

So Robbie Williams wants to be known as Robert Williams from now on [News

LISTEN UP! >>



"I'M GONNA SIT right down and write myself a letter," sang Frank Sinatra. What's the point of that? Why not write to *Blender* instead? If it's printed, you'll win one of these awesome SONICblue Rio Sport S30S digital music players. It works on both PCs and Macs and comes with skip-free music playback, at least 64 megs of memory, 15 hours of playback, a stopwatch, a clock and an FM tuner. And it plays both MP3s and WMAs. So get writing!

Letters to the Editor, *Blender*
1040 Avenue of the Americas, 22nd floor
New York, New York 10018
Or: your2cents@blender.com. Good luck!



LeAnn Rimes: "Are you sure this dress isn't see-through?"

Roundup!, November]? Too bad — because I intend to keep calling him the same thing I've always called him: a talentless ass wipe.

STEPHEN GALLELA, NASHVILLE, TEXAS

You should hear what he calls you.

PINK'S SWEET ASS

After reading your recent cover story on Pink ["A Darker Shade of Pink," October], I love her more than ever. I like what she said: "Is it me, or does broccoli smell like ass?" Well, if broccoli smelled like *her* ass, I'd have a mouth full of broccoli every day of the week for months. I might even get broccoli-capped teeth. Hell, I would soak myself in broccoli cologne. Wouldn't you?

MATT BURTON, CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

No. Now, if it were *asparagus* cologne . . .

MADONNA IS "LICKY"

Blender recently noted that 22 percent of Americans think Bruce Springsteen is more deserving of having his image on a postage stamp than any other pop star ["Lick Me!", October]. I think the results of the Harris Poll you cite would have been considerably different if respondents had known that the proposed Madonna stamp licks itself.

KEVIN NEWHOUSE, ARCATA, CALIFORNIA



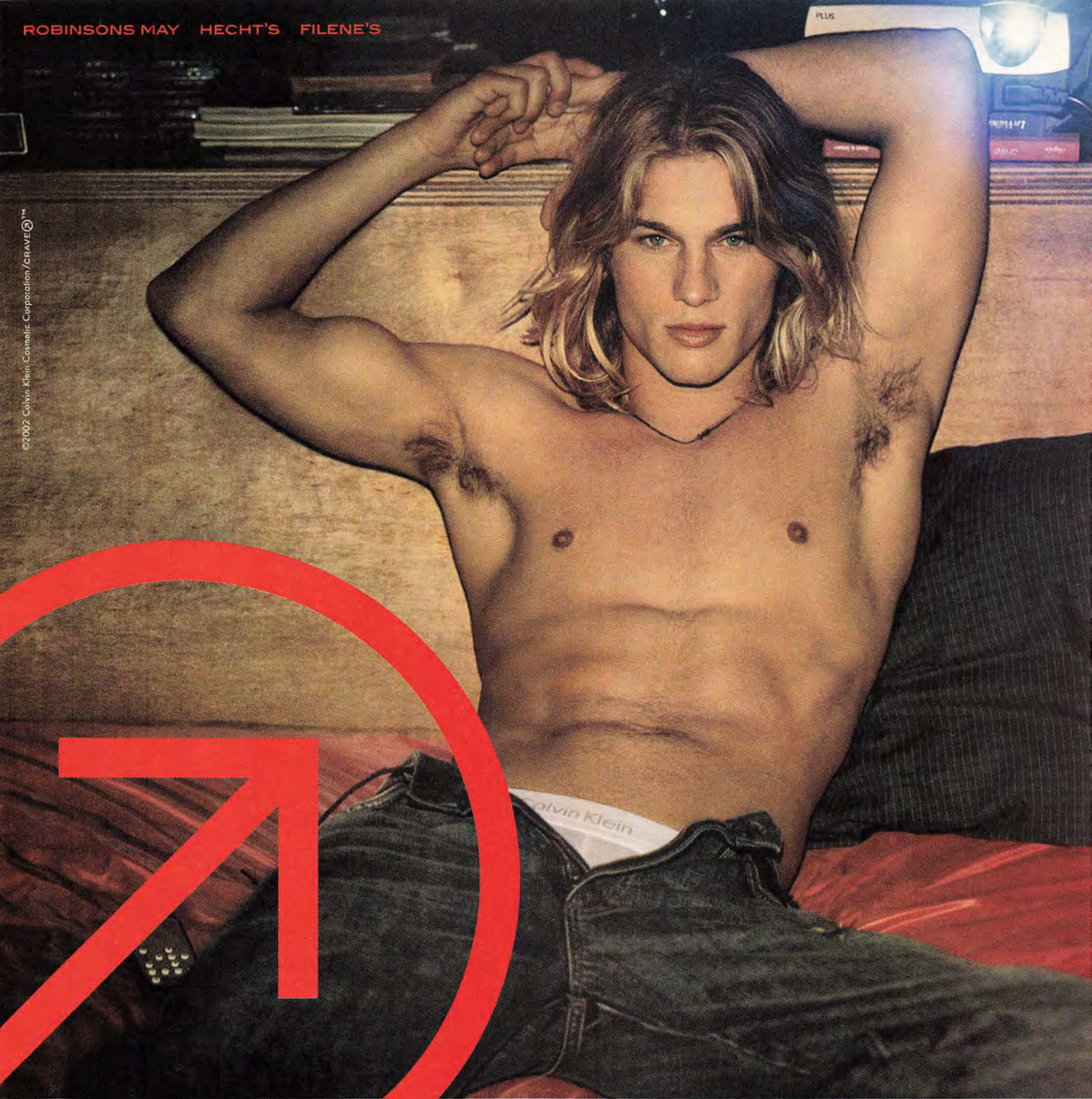
Michael, that's never going to fit over that head of hair.

RADIO IS A DISGRACE!

In your piece on rock's 25 most dastardly villains [October], you missed perhaps the greatest villain of all: FM radio, which has homogenized playlists to the point that the vast majority of the artists whose albums *Blender* reviews can't be heard on radio stations around the country. My local stations think new music is the new Rolling Stones song, or the latest crap from Creed. For established artists, they play the same 10 songs rather than delve into their catalogs. It's sad to think how many →

ROBINSONS MAY HECHT'S FILENE'S

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Disturbed: "Hey, does anyone else feel strangely inadequate?"



great artists have never had a chance at superstardom thanks to a format that sticks to the same formula. When I started listening to the radio in the late '70s, it wasn't unusual to have a DJ play a record no one had ever heard of, simply because he bought it over the weekend and thought his listeners would get off on something new. That could never happen these days on a major station.

MICHAEL A. GINSBERG, PHILADELPHIA

UNMENTIONABLE!

Although I agree with you that MDC [Mark David Chapman] is the most dastardly villain in all of rock, I was kind of upset with you for publishing his name. MDC claimed to have killed John Lennon just to get his name in the papers! It seems that by pointing out how much of a bastard he is, you're actually doing him a favor!

RICHARD STOFLE, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

ASSHOLE CONFUSION

I enjoyed your pointer on how to make a Flaming Asshole [Useful Tips From the Stars With Sammy Hagar, November]. But in the accompanying photo, which one is Sammy and which is the asshole?

CARLY JAMESON, SUNRISE, FLORIDA

BLAME LEONARDO

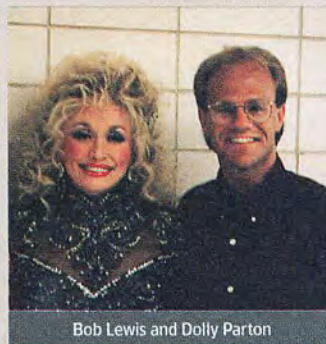
In attacking the Wright Brothers as one of rock's most dastardly villains, you incorrectly said that Stevie Ray Vaughan died in an airplane crash. His *helicopter* crashed just outside of East



Sammy Hagar sets fire to "Asshole."

SUPERFAN!

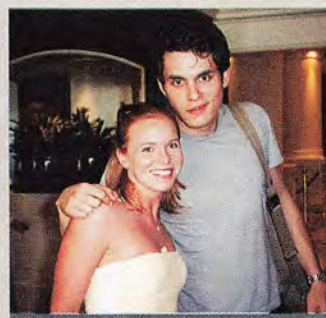
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Bob Lewis and Dolly Parton



Natasha Espino and Pharrell Williams



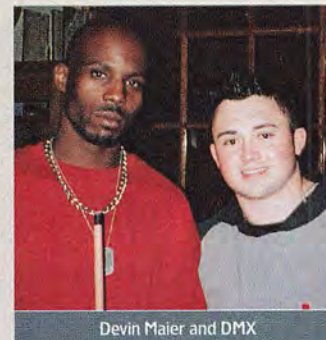
Cathy Werner and John Mayer



Cherilyn Teague and Beyoncé Knowles



Matt Gunderson and James Brown



Devin Maier and DMX



★ HAPPY HOLIDAYS, Superfans! *Blender* has something special to give y'all. A new, state-of-the-art Timex watch that plays two hours of MP3s! Small enough to wear on your wrist or clip to . . . er, anything! Just send us a photo of you with your favorite music celebrity, and we'll do the rest. Send your photos and contact information to *Blender* Superfan, 1040 Avenue of the Americas, 22nd floor, New York, New York 10018. And make a mental note: *Blender* cares.

Troy, Wisconsin. Blame Michelangelo.

STEVE FORSTNEGER, CHICAGO

You're right . . . and wrong — da Vinci dreamed up the helicopter.

WEIRD LETTER

What was Pink wearing on the cover of your October issue? It looks like a Fruit Roll-Up. Yummy for the tummy!

LANCE GARDNER, PENN YAN, NEW YORK →

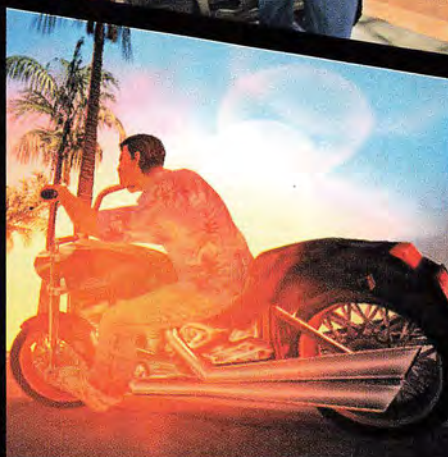
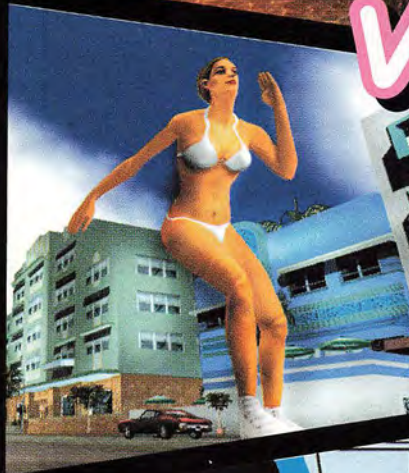


The Wright Brothers: "The emergency exits are located . . . well, everywhere, actually."

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Jon Bon Jovi: "OK, I'll paint the whole place for \$300."

DEPT. OF BEER GOGGLES

Please, *please* tell me how I can get the old photo of Bon Jovi on page 62 of your November issue. The hair. The makeup. The clothes. Wow! Only Jon Bon Jovi could have made eyeliner and an off-the-shoulder shirt sexy on a man. Of course, it doesn't hurt that I'm totally drunk right now.

CHERYL KATZ, CHICAGO

STOP COPYING!

Today I noticed the cover of another music magazine boasting that it's now reviewing more albums than it used to. I also noticed a revamped format with



The Rolling Stones: "Anyone fancy a jog?"



Ludacris: He said it.

more informative articles and funnier captions. Coincidence? I think not! Thank you for raising the bar, *Blender*. Don't tell the editors of the other magazine, but you're still my favorite.

ANDY MYERS, PHOENIXVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

Well, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. Don't worry; we won't tell a soul.

BILL WYMAN IS GROSS

I was not surprised at all to learn that Mick Jagger's daughter Jade says she refuses to employ ugly people in her jewelry store [News Roundup!, November]. After all, doesn't Mick use the same policy? That would certainly explain the continuing absence of Bill Wyman from the Rolling Stones' lineup.

JACQUELYNN MARCOWITZ, MIAMI

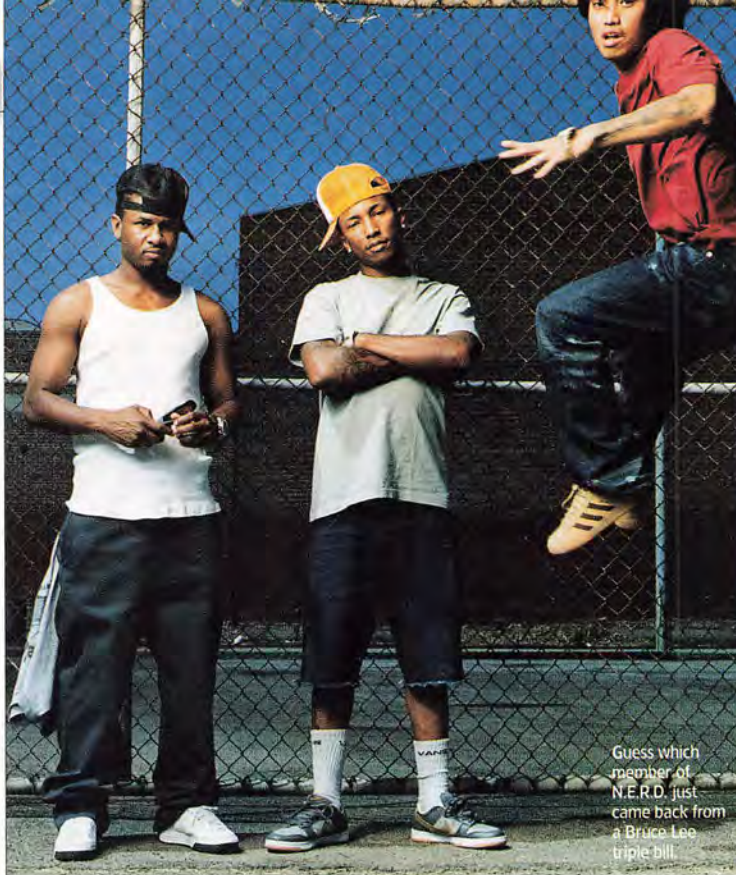
NOTHING BUT PORN AND CURSE WORDS!

This is the worst music magazine I've ever read. Last month's issue featured a naked person, which offends me. I wish I'd never asked for a free sample. This magazine is nothing but porn and curse words.

KARYN BROWN, SUMERDUCK, VIRGINIA

I WAS LUDACRIS'S WAITRESS!

I just want to send a hello to *Blender* and tell you how much I enjoy the magazine. Reading the piece about spending three days as Ludacris's lackey ["I Was a Rap Star's Ass Wiper!", October], I noticed you mentioned the night he



Guess which member of N.E.R.D. just came back from a Bruce Lee triple bill.

stopped at Club Insomnia in Washington, D.C. I was working at Insomnia that night and was Ludacris's waitress for the evening. He was cool — and he left a phat-ass tip. Thanks again.

JANINE SIMS, LOUDON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Hey, if Ludacris left the tip, why did our writer bill us for it? *Security!*

MR. BOUNTIFUL!

Your piece about Trustcompany spending \$848 in a *Blender*-funded shopping spree ["Buying Crack Would Be Funny!", October] has changed me. I have always been rather miserly and stingy toward my friends, but my blackened heart turned a bit kinder after reading the piece — I decided to go out and buy a copy of *Blender* for one of them. How's that for generosity, eh?

DAN BOZARSKI, DES PLAINES, ILLINOIS

OBNOXIOUS!

I enjoyed your piece on rock's most dastardly villains. Thanks for including the insufferable Lars Ulrich of Metallica. But if you're going to include Tipper Gore, why not George H.W. Bush and Dan Quayle? If Simon Cowell, whom you call "obnoxious," why not Oasis's Liam Gallagher? If cocaine, why not heroin? The Spice Girls? Courtney Love? Charles Manson? Yoko Ono? And let's not forget commercials, such as the recent Jaguar ad featuring the Clash's "London Calling."

NICK OBIS, DAYTON, OHIO



Love is hell!

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**WORLD
EXCLUSIVE!**

BLENDER

TO ALL OUR FRIENDS!

NEXT ISSUE OF BLENDER

ON SALE DEC. 24

**MARIAH
CAREY**

MAKES HER COMEBACK!



stretch your imagination



The CRW-F1 With Exclusive DiscT@2 Technology

**The Ultimate
CD Recorder**

Yamaha's all new CRW-F1 is designed to enhance the style of the contemporary computer workstation. Engineered for easy connectivity via ATAPI, FireWire, USB 2.0 and SCSI, the CRW-F1 delivers reliable performance, high quality and top speed CD recording with whisper quiet operation.

Among its long list of impressive new features, CRW-F1's revolutionary DiscT@2™ Laser Labeling System stands out as the world's only laser based "tattoo" system to etch graphics and text onto CD-R discs, eliminating the need for labels. Next, enter the exclusive new Advanced Audio Master

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So, whether you are a PC user or Mac user, let Yamaha CRW-F1's extraordinary features and technologies take you to a world with infinite possibilities and where stretching your imagination is just the beginning...

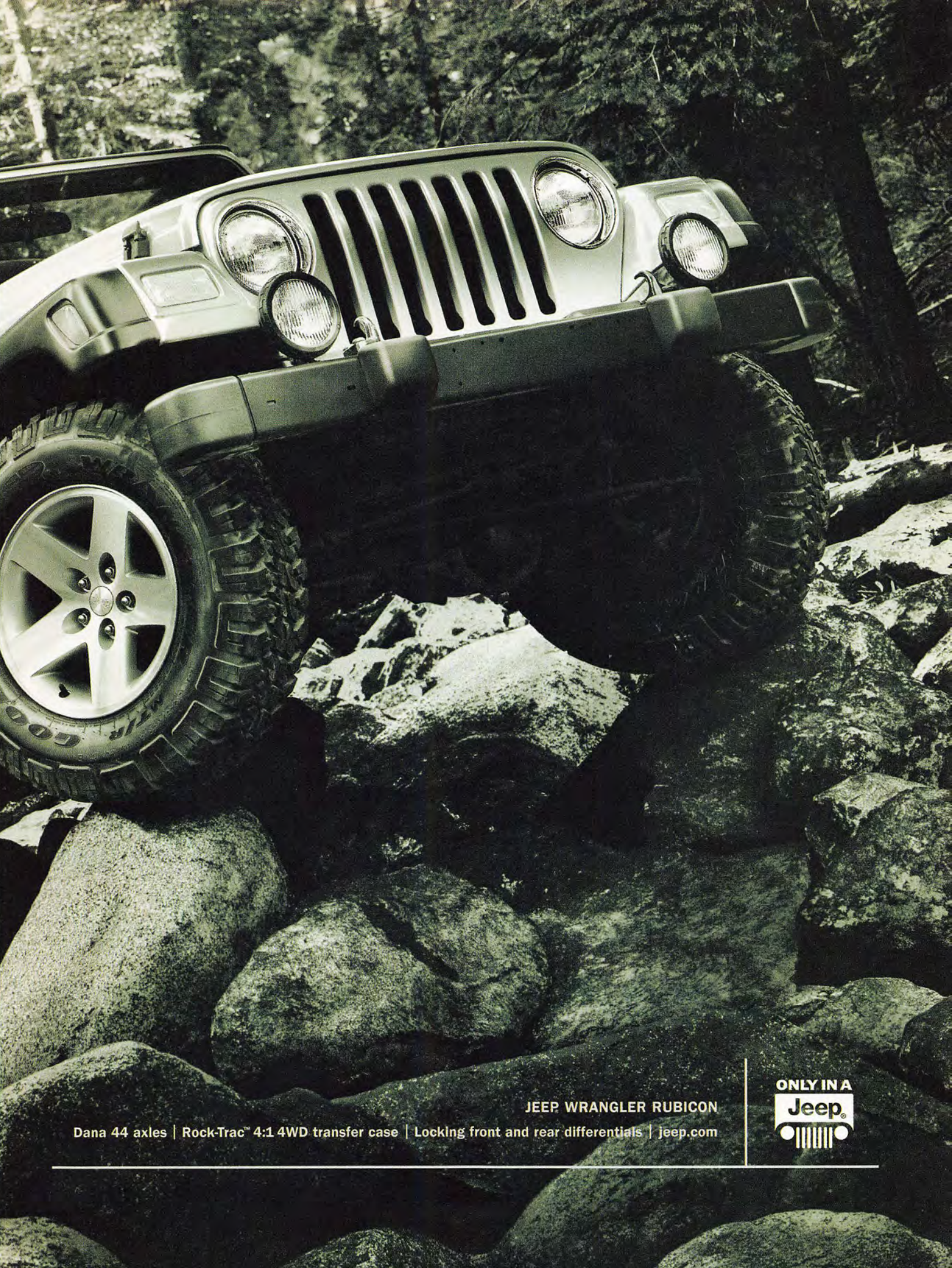


YAMAHA

A silver Jeep Wrangler is shown from a side-rear perspective, driving on a rocky trail. The vehicle is positioned on the right side of the frame, with its rear wheel visible and resting on a large rock. The trail is composed of many large, dark, mossy rocks. The background is a dense forest with tall trees and thick foliage, creating a dark and moody atmosphere. The lighting is dramatic, with sunlight filtering through the trees, highlighting the Jeep and the rocks.

**WHEN'S THE LAST TIME YOU GOT
GOOSEBUMPS TRAVELING AT 3 MPH?**

Jeep is a registered trademark of DaimlerChrysler Corporation. Don't attempt extreme trails without proper instruction and equipment.



JEEP WRANGLER RUBICON

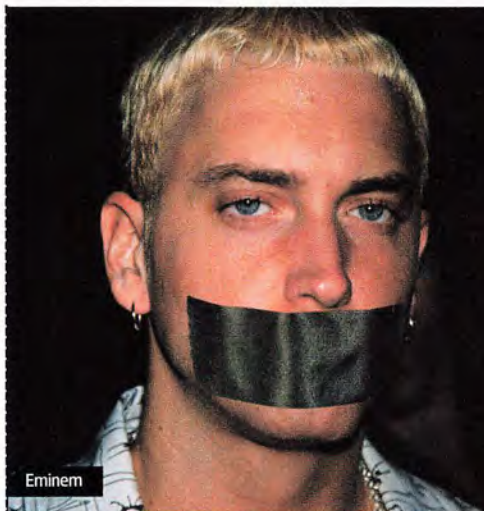
Dana 44 axles | Rock-Trac™ 4:1 4WD transfer case | Locking front and rear differentials | jeep.com



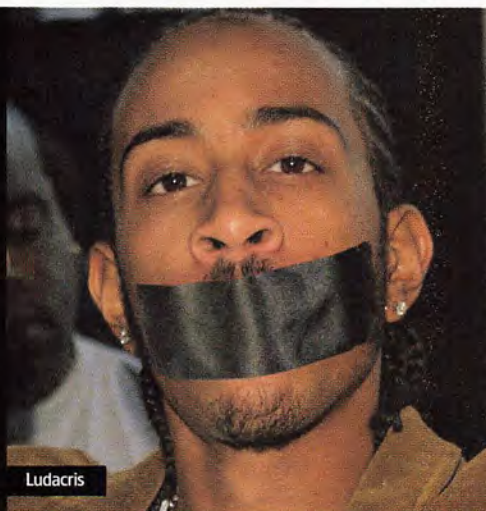
BURNER

ALL THE MUSIC. ALL THE NEWS. ALL THE TIME

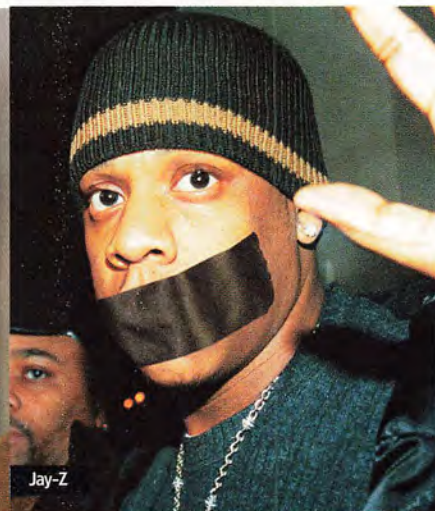
★ CHRISTINA AGUILERA ★ KORN ★ BRITNEY SPEARS ★ BJÖRK'S MOM ➤➤



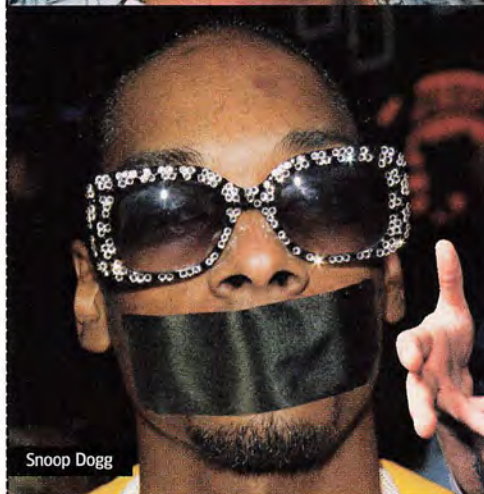
Eminem



Ludacris



Jay-Z



Snoop Dogg



Insane Clown Posse



Marilyn Manson



I smashed them on
The Radio Factor!

Bill O'Reilly has taken aim
at pop and hip-hop artists.

Silenced!

Does right-wing TV pundit Bill O'Reilly have a grudge against pop music?

★ FOX NEWS and syndicated radio commentator Bill O'Reilly has allegedly forced Snoop Dogg to be axed from the new Muppets movie — a move that seems part of a campaign to blacklist outspoken pop stars.

Snoop Dogg has told *Blender* he believes his cameo in this December's *It's a Very Muppet Christmas Movie* was cut because of an O'Reilly vendetta.

"I know it [was]," said Dogg, a onetime marijuana user and

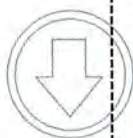
murder suspect, now a porn entrepreneur. "I don't see any reason for them to fly me to Vancouver for two days, tape it one day and then kick it the next day. Then they say how much they loved it and enjoyed me being there and took pictures with me and all the characters."

Muppet moguls at Jim Henson Productions maintain Dogg's scene was cut due to "time constraints." But the rapper disagrees.

"That's fucked up," Dogg said. "You gonna get Snoop in a position to do this kinda shit, knowing that he's [sworn off taking drugs] now, and then pull him off and make some weak-ass excuse?"

O'Reilly blasted Jim Henson Productions for including Dogg in the Muppet movie on the September 27 installment of his afternoon radio show, *The Radio Factor*, and that evening's broadcast of Fox's *The O'Reilly Factor*,

Clockwise from bottom left: Lawrence Lucier/Getty Images; Jen Lowery/LFI; Chris DeMoss/Zuma; Ken Lowery/LFI; Aubrey Reuben/LFI; Michael Williams/LFI; Kevin Estrada/Reina Ltd. Duct tape: Getty Images



News Roundup!

the highest-rated cable news program. Dogg's cameo was cut that same day.

"Late today, word out of Hollywood was that Snoopy [sic] would indeed wind up on the cutting-room floor," O'Reilly announced on the televised *Factor*. "I smashed them on *The Radio Factor*," he continued, "and all of a sudden, he's gone."

On his shows, O'Reilly regularly lambastes stars he considers less than wholesome and the family-friendly corporations that associate with them:

→ **OCTOBER 16, 2002** O'Reilly criticized Tower Records and the *New York Times* for running ads on the VH1 special *Music Behind Bars*, which featured a band that includes two incarcerated murderers. He then broadcast the e-mail address of VH1 president Christina Norman.

→ **AUGUST 29, 2002** Pepsi axed rapper Ludacris from a lucrative endorsement deal after O'Reilly called him a "subversive influence on children."

→ **JUNE 3, 2002** O'Reilly railed against Eminem for including the voice of his 6-year-old daughter, Hailie, on "My Dad's Gone Crazy." He derided the song as being "obscene."

→ **MARCH 28, 2002** O'Reilly presented a special on the Fox Network, *The Corruption of the American Child*, on which he blasted shock-rockers Marilyn Manson and rappers Insane Clown Posse. He also chided Def Jam CEO Russell Simmons and Roc-A-Fella CEO Damon Dash for promoting "irresponsible" rap music by such artists as Ludacris, DMX and Jay-Z.

→ **NOVEMBER 6, 2001** Celebrities appearing on the September 11 telethon *A Tribute to Heroes* — among them Bruce Springsteen and Limp Bizkit — were upbraided by O'Reilly for not monitoring the distribution of funds to charitable organizations.

→ **FEBRUARY 21, 2001** O'Reilly blasted the Recording Academy for presenting an Eminem-and-Elton John duet on that evening's Grammy broadcast. O'Reilly also compared Eminem to Hitler.

O'Reilly refused to comment for this article. **ROB KEMP**

MISSY ELLIOTT was to pay tribute to **AALIYAH** at a recent show in New York by using the late singer's backup band and dancers. However, Elliott forgot the words to many of her own songs as well as those of Aaliyah's, including "One in a Million," which Elliott wrote. To appease angry fans, Elliott threw them an autographed T-shirt, which they threw back.

Emo-rock stalwarts **THE PROMISE RING** have broken up.

British pop band **HEAR'SAY** has broken up because, as it said in a statement, "We were being called 'wankers' by people in the street."

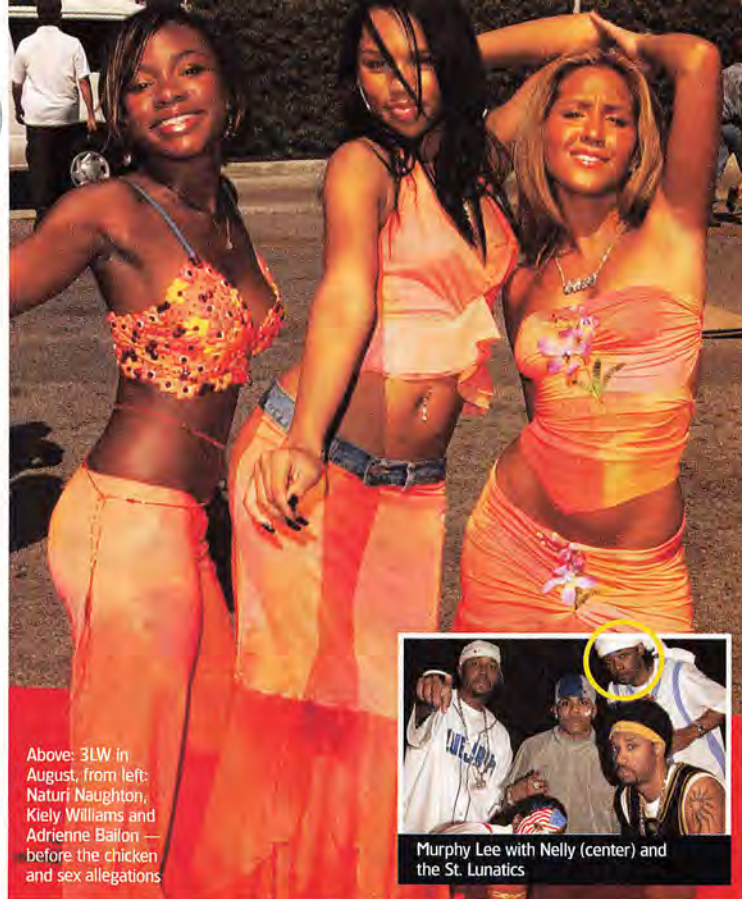
Roc-A-Fella artist **KANYE WEST**, who has produced Jay-Z, Scarface and Mos Def, had to have his jaw wired shut after being injured in a car accident in Los Angeles.

Word!



A drag queen caught in a woman's body.

KYLIE MINOGUE, ON HOW SHE SEES HERSELF



Above: 3LW in August, from left: Naturi Naughton, Kiely Williams and Adrienne Bailon — before the chicken and sex allegations



Murphy Lee with Nelly (center) and the St. Lunatics

3LW Deny Sex Scandal!

Saucy teen group refutes claims of spurned member

FORMER 3LW MEMBER Naturi Naughton's claim that she was ousted from the teen group for not having sex with a member of St. Louis rapper Nelly's entourage has been vehemently denied by 3LW's manager.

Tse Williams, who is both the older sister of 3LW's 16-year-old Kiely Williams and the duo's comanager, called the allegation "completely false."

"I've been in the music business for 12 years — I'm not going to throw my career out the window because I want to send an 18-year-old to have sex with an artist," she said. "It's ridiculous."

In a lawsuit filed on October 4 in U.S. District Court in Newark, New Jersey, Naughton alleged that Tse Williams and her sister Michelle Williams, a 3LW comanager, browbeat her for not "getting her mack game up" — apparently while spending time with Murphy Lee, a member of Nelly's St. Lunatics entourage.

The lawsuit implies that Naughton was expected to

trade sexual favors in order to secure 3LW a spot on Nelly's current tour. But Tse Williams maintained Naughton has "twisted everything."

Tse Williams, a vice president of A&R at Universal Records, insisted that she did not attempt to influence Naughton's behavior. She also rejected Naughton's implication that the remaining 3LW members, Kiely Williams and Adrienne Bailon, 18, have had sex with men to advance the group's career.

"She's insinuating the girls may have had sex with artists, leaving everything open to interpretation," Tse Williams said. "That's unfortunate, because the girls haven't said anything disparaging about her in any way. They're shocked."

Representatives for the St. Lunatics declined comment to *Blender* regarding Naughton's relationship with Lee.

In September, Naughton told New York radio station WBLS that she left the group because Kiely Williams and Bailon pelted her with fried chicken.

Naughton and her lawyer did not return *Blender*'s calls. 3LW released their second album, *A Girl Can Mack*, on October 22. **ROB KEMP**



"Getting her mack game up."



Wait, if Good Charlotte are identical twins, shouldn't Joel also have spikes?

Do You Rock? ★

Good Charlotte

Does a band with identical twins and a Top 10 album rock?

Which Olsen twin would you rather party with: Mary Kate or Ashley?

JOEL MADDEN Isn't one of them fatter than the other? Just kidding. They're like little 5-year-olds trapped in 16-year-olds' bodies. They need to hang out with Benji for a little while. He would straighten them out. BENJI MADDEN Which one is hotter?

Ever get lucky on an airplane?

JOEL No. I'm so terrified of flying that I don't think about anything but death on an airplane. I think my brother has. BENJI Not exactly on the airplane — one time I made out with this girl at the airport.

Ever shared a groupie?

JOEL Oh, no. Not that we know of. No, we definitely haven't. BENJI Joel doesn't partake of groupies.

Ever driven a car into a swimming pool?

BENJI Joel did drive a riding lawnmower into one. It was a house party. The pool was in the backyard. The riding lawnmower was there too. Needless to say, it was a bad idea.

Biggest celeb's crib you've gotten drunk in?

JOEL Sad to say, I've yet to do that. Maybe someone will read this and invite me over.

Ever trashed a hotel room?

BENJI Yeah. It was with Nest, a punk band from Chicago. We stacked the beds up against the wall so we could run into them. The dresser was on its side, broken. TV, lamps — everything was in a pile!

What is your brother thinking about right now?

JOEL He's probably thinking, "What am I going to eat, and what am I going to do tonight?" BENJI The mall. Joel is all about the mall. When we're on tour, the first thing he does is look for a mall. JON REGARDIE

Verdict

THE TWINS OF GOOD CHARLOTTE ... DO NOT ROCK — YET!

→ GOOD CHARLOTTE'S NEW ALBUM, *THE YOUNG AND THE HOPELESS (EPIC)*, IS OUT NOW.

News Roundup!

Pop star **JENNIFER LOVE HEWITT** recently admitted that she would rather let her teeth "fall out" than return to the dentist's chair for further treatment of her trench-mouth, the rare gum disease.

Former Mötley Crüe drummer **TOMMY LEE** has proposed settling his remaining 237 hours of community service for spousal abuse of Pamela Anderson by performing concerts at U.S. military bases around the world.

Admitted Eminem fan, pop singer and mother of one **SINEAD O'CONNOR** has banned Slim Shady's music from her house because "he's not for kids."

JANET JACKSON recently announced she has a crush on former President Bill Clinton.

American Idol judge and British music mogul **SIMON COWELL** called **JENNIFER LOPEZ** a "joke" for having an "entourage of 70 people."

Word!



We can't wait to meet Brian Jones.

JACK WHITE, ON OPENING FOR THE ROLLING STONES



Björk's Ma Strikes!

The mother of Icelandic pop star Björk is on a hunger strike

★ BJÖRK'S MOTHER is on a hunger strike to protest a power plant currently slated to be built in the Icelandic highlands.

Hildur Runa Hauksdottir is protesting against the Karahnjúkar Hydropower Project, a plan sponsored by Iceland's government and Alcoa, the world's largest aluminum producer, to build a power plant and smelter in eastern Iceland.

Critics charge that the plan would threaten the area's diverse wildlife.

Since October 6, Hauksdottir has been living off nothing but homeopathic tea brewed from thyme and yarrow. "I haven't decided how far to go," the activist mom said.

Three days before her protest began, she became a grandmother when Björk gave birth to a baby girl. CLARISSA LASKY



Björk with mom at 2001 Oscars

Pop Star Must-Have

TIES!

Who needs collars? Behold the latest pop-star fashion craze: ties! Yabba dabba doo!



"Look at me — I'm with the band!"



Courtney Love



Gwen Stefani



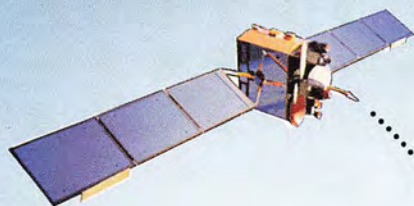
Avril Lavigne



Jack Osbourne

\$100 MILLION SATELLITES BEAM SIXTY CHANNELS OF CRYSTAL-CLEAR, COMMERCIAL-FREE MUSIC.

(NOT THE KIND OF THING YOU WANT TO PLAY THROUGH A CHEAP PIECE OF JUNK.)



After photographing the far reaches of deep space, satellites have finally given us their greatest contribution to mankind: better radio.

Tune your Kenwood to a typical radio station and you hear the same old songs, the same old commercials—over and over again. Well here is our answer, courtesy of the latest 21st century technology: Sirius Satellite Radio.

Just imagine 60 music channels playing everything under the sun without one single commercial. Plus all 60 music channels and all 40 sports, news and entertainment channels are digital-quality, utilizing Sirius'

KENWOOD

unique S-PLEX technology for superior sound.

Now, this is not something you want to hear through a bargain-bin car stereo. What you need is a stereo that plays these tunes with the unspoiled, distortion-free treatment they deserve. What you need is a Kenwood.

We offer a complete line of Sirius-ready stereos that all play with the crystal-clear sound that people expect from Kenwood.

And we've loaded them with the kind of extras, from scrolling text to superior graphic displays, that put lesser car stereos back in their place.



Sound good? Well, Kenwood has everything you need to get started: a Sirius tuner, antenna and a Sirius-ready stereo. (Or just use our FM Adapter to play Sirius Satellite Radio through your current stereo.) Then subscribe to the Sirius service and you can enjoy this musical motherlode without interruption, from coast to coast, 24/7.

So, will you miss hearing all those stale commercials? Well if you do, just remember, every Kenwood still plays conventional radio, too.

You know, in case you want to remind yourself just how good you really have it.



The Next Big Thing!

THE POLYPHONIC SPREE

This lightly psychedelic, 24-piece Texas orchestra is one of the best live acts in America!

TEXT BY NICK DUERDEN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEGO

Could this be the cover of
Blender 2003?



* TIM DeLAUGHTER, the Polyphonic Spree's evangelical frontman, greets *Blender* at his Dallas home with a haggard expression on his face: He's spent the morning doing yoga.

"I've recently become quite strict about keeping myself in shape," he says with a yawn. "I'm an old man, 36 going on 37, and I exhaust a lot of energy onstage. I want to keep my body intact, and yoga does a pretty good job. But boy, it's tiring!"

In under 20 minutes, DeLaughter's wife and three young children will arrive home for lunch, and the kind of chaos that only pre-pubescent can bring will erupt. But that's OK; he's used to it: "I'm busy, so busy these days, but I'm enjoying every minute of it"

The Polyphonic Spree are America's most idiosyncratic new group. For starters, there are 24 of them. They all wear white robes. Some have beards. And the music they make, as magnificently displayed on their debut, *The Beginning Stages Of...*, is a wide-eyed mixture of Flaming Lips histrionics and *Godspell* evangelicalism. They are also one of the most spectacular live acts in music.

DeLaughter, the former singer for Tripping Daisy, decided to follow his grandest musical ambitions two years after that band's untimely 1998 demise.

"I'd lost my friend [Tripping Daisy guitarist Wes Berggren] to a drug overdose, and lost the band as a result," he says. "The only way I could begin again was by doing something pretty special."

Ranging in age from 16 to 37, Polyphonic Spree members play every kind of instrument, and when their voices join in choral harmonies, they invoke a type of religious fervor preachers can only dream of.

"We are combining the symphonic with rock music," DeLaughter says. "By dressing the same, we make ourselves stand out from the crowd. It gives us a righteous feeling, and we do feel very celebratory."

And, as in any regular cult, he says, they have formed strong ties with one another.

"We have husband-and-wife teams, and plenty of boyfriends and girlfriends. Once, we had three women pregnant simultaneously. We're very fertile people!" [BLENDEE]

OUT NOW >>>



THE BEGINNING
STAGES OF ...
GOOD

The Polyphonic Spree: Tim DeLaughter (foreground) and his cult of white-robed psychedelic converts

> A wide-eyed mixture of Flaming Lips histrionics and *Godspell* evangelicalism.



Available at Fine Department Stores



★ Weird Band Alert!



Wait, so even crude technology is evil? Whoa.

CAPTURED! BY ROBOTS

They're a band of robots who captured their creator and still regularly torture him onstage — all while rocking!

WAIT, A BAND OF ROBOTS?

Yep. It's led by San Francisco-based keyboardist-guitarist Jay Vance, who claims he started building musical robots in 1996 — only to have them rebel and plant a chip in his brain. They now "force" him to tour with them. They also call him a "douche bag" during their punk-metal sets.

ARE WE TALKING TERMINATOR-STYLE ANDROIDS?

Hardly. DRMBOT666, for example, is basically just a drum kit with sticks programmed to hit it. But it does have a head that lights up and spins around, Exorcist-style.

DEWD, VANCE IS COOL WITH ALL OF THIS?

"Even though I have been captured, I am having some of the most fun I have ever had," he says. "The robots are starting to rock the shit pretty hard. And even though most of them are maniacal and cruel and talk about destroying my species, they're still my babies."

JON REGARDIE



"HELLO, MY NAME IS TRUHHH."

News Roundup!

Teen hip-hop artist **LIL' ROMEO** is set to star in the film *Lil' Romeo and Lil' Juliet*. Romeo's father, rap star **MASTER P**, will direct.

MADONNA's father, Tony Ciccone, received tepid reviews of his latest batch of Pinot Noir wine from residents close to his Michigan vineyard. Their judgments ranged from "flat" to "disappointing."

MTV confirmed plans to make a film about the rise and fall of **NAPSTER**. Alex Winter, who starred opposite Keanu Reeves in *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*, will direct.

A fire has destroyed Sugar Hill studio in Englewood, New Jersey, the studio where **THE SUGAR HILL GANG** recorded the breakthrough hip-hop song "Rapper's Delight" in 1979.

American Idol finalist **TAMYRA GRAY** will play a student on Fox's *Boston Public* on four episodes in February.

Word!



I'm living proof that hepatitis C can be contained and that ZZ Top cannot.

DUSTY HILL OF ZZ TOP

LIVE, YO!



IS THIS THE FUTURE OF CNN?

WHY **BUSH** BE **BUGGIN'**

CNN NOTE: WHITE HOUSE FIRM TO **HUSSEIN: "SHIZZLE OUR NIZZLE"** HOT ▲97.1
AGHDAD STILL DISSING WACK-ASS WEAPONS INSPECTIO

Wassup, CNN?

Is cable news giant CNN really going hip-hop?

★ CNN HEADLINE NEWS has revealed that it intends to mix hip-hop lingo into its broadcasts.

A memo issued by a mid-level producer to the attention of graphics writers recently directed network employees to start using more "urban" terms during broadcasts, according to the October 2 edition of the *New York Daily News*.

"Please use this guide to help all you homeys and honeys add a new flava to your tickers and dekos," the memo stated, referring to the graphics that appear on the Headline News screen.

But Headline News chief Rolando Santos told *Blender* that the memo's significance was blown out of proportion.

"It's about slang and current phrases," he said.

He also said the memo was not a directive to CNN reporters and anchors to "bust" hip-hop words or "drop" slang terms into their reports. It was principally intended for those in charge of onscreen graphics and the ticker that scrolls

across the bottom of the newscast — though Santos said he wouldn't mind if on-air personalities loosened up their language a bit.

"I don't want my anchors to worry if under the right circumstances they say, 'You know what? This game rocks,'" he said. "But I certainly would not advocate in any way, shape or form saying, 'Hey, you know what? The president really rocked today!'"

Headline News is CNN's 24-hour-a-day news-in-a-flash channel that puts a premium on splashy graphics. Its audience is the youngest of the cable news channels — one-third of its viewers are between 18 and 34 — and executives want to maintain Headline News's position as a quicker, cooler alternative to the more staid network broadcasts.

"We need to be reflective of our audience in the way we present

the news,"

Santos said. He also said he wants to keep pushing the pop-culture envelope in the future. JASON GAY

The CNN memo:

In an effort to be sure we are as national-wide as possible, as in it being a "the All About the Bepennia" Refer to this guide to help all you homeys add a new flava to your tickers and dekos.

benjamins (n) Money, specifically one-hundred-dollar bills, as in "Daddy, I'm the All About the Bepennia." Refer to this guide to help all you homeys add a new flava to your tickers and dekos.

bust (v) To behave inappropriately, irrationally or arrogantly. Why you acting so crazy? You bustin'!

dis (v) To insult or discourage. Short for disrespect.

down with (adv) Embracing a particular idea, activity or thing. Are you down with that?

floss (v) To show off, most often with an over-the-top display of material wealth. Flashing items (e.g., one's cheese or bling) bling to the faces of others.

The CNN memo also included, of all things, a hip-hop glossary.



Grow Moore.

About 15% of your
height is added during your
teen years, and milk can help.
What more can you ask for?

got milk?

> The vocal style of Eve set to poppy, radio-friendly beats.

The Next Big Thing!

CHARLI BALTIMORE

This sexy Notorious B.I.G. protégée put cancer, murder and suicide behind her to become the hottest Philadelphia rap star since Eve

BY NICK DUERDEN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUDSON BAKER

★ IN A COUPLE of weeks, Charli Baltimore will release her official debut, *My Diary*. She's in a triumphant mood today, and she should be: This day has been a long time coming.

Baltimore has packed a hell of a lot into her first 28 years. Born Tiffany Lane in Philadelphia and raised in Jackson, Tennessee, she moved back to Philadelphia in her teens, later met a guy, had a kid and became a paralegal secretary. She went blond, got some tattoos, met another guy, had another kid and struggled to make ends meet. Then one night she went to see the Notorious B.I.G. in concert, and everything changed.

"And I haven't been able to forget it since," she says with a smile that takes the dictionary definition of *rueful* and makes it her own.

The pair embarked on an affair. Biggie rechristened her Charli Baltimore, after Geena Davis's feisty character in *The Long Kiss Goodnight*. She had plans to break into the rap game, but bad things ensued in a series of incidents that would make a Hollywood scriptwriter wince: Her father died of cancer, a former boyfriend committed suicide, her best friend was killed and Biggie was also gunned down. Then, two years later, her

record label folded, and her debut, *Cold as Ice*, was never released.

"It was pretty devastating," she says, "and I've suffered a lot in this industry. First, people wanted to market me as some kind of supermodel, which I'm not, and they wanted to link my artistry with Biggie's shadow, which wasn't cool. They should let the poor man rest in peace and allow my artistry to shine alone. It sure as hell deserves to."

My Diary was written in an eight-week frenzy after two years of soul-searching. The result: Baltimore has emerged as the next tough-talking gangstress from Philly — with the vocal style of Eve set to poppy, radio-friendly beats.

"When *Cold as Ice* didn't come out, I thought about quitting altogether," she says. Instead, she took a small role in the Spike Lee film *Bamboozled*, guested on Ja Rule records and gradually rediscovered her lost determination.

"I've finally reached a good point in my life," she says. "I've put my all into this album. It's a hell of an accomplishment for a female rapper, and I think people will be pleasantly surprised when they hear this record." Her eyes grow wide with expectation. "Don't you?" [BLENDER]

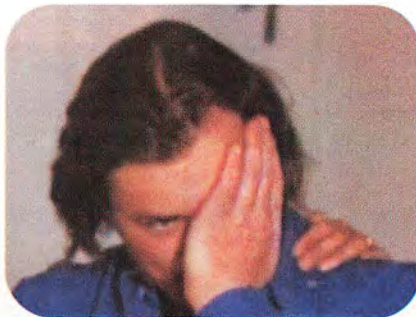
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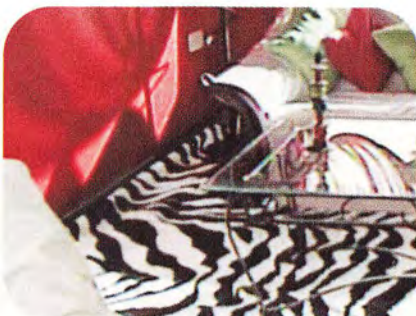
JACKET BY YUJI
YAMAHOTO. SHORTS
BY DENT. BOOTS BY
A. TESTONI

OUT NOW >>

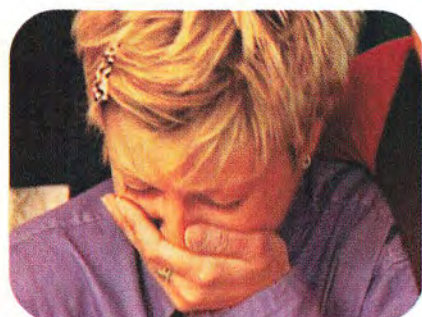
MY DIARY MURDER INC./DEF JAM



senseless acts



of redecorating.



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Avril Lavigne shoots — and scores!

HOCKEY PUNKS ARE THE NEW SKATE PUNKS

AND OTHER LATE-BREAKING DEVELOPMENTS

Not showing up for court	is the new	Getting nabbed for shoplifting
Donnie Wahlberg	is the new	Mark Wahlberg
Kilimanjaro	is the new	Polar ice cap
Shrek Live!, the Broadway musical	is the new	Cats, the Broadway musical
"Summer of '69!"	is the new	"Free Bird!"
Canadian Idol	is the new	American Idol
Friends star Courteney Cox's in vitro fertilization	is the new	Friends star Lisa Kudrow's nose job
Ageism	is the new	Sexism
Nick Carter not dating Britney Spears	is the new	Justin Timberlake not dating Christina Aguilera
Lizzie Grubman, celebrity prison bitch	is the new	Lizzie Grubman, celebrity P.R. bitch
Mrs. Rock	is the new	Mrs. Lee

News Roundup!

DAVID LACHAP-ELLE, the director of **CHRISTINA AGUILERA**'s controversial "Dirty" video, has issued an apology to Thailand's government over posters displayed in the video's background. They translate from the Thai to read **THAILAND'S SEX TOURISM AND YOUNG UNDERAGE GIRLS**.

PETER BLAKE, who designed the cover of the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, has been knighted by Prince Charles.

ANGIE MARTINEZ, a 2002 BET Award nominee for best female hip-hop artist, has been tapped to be the fourth judge for *American Idol 2*.

The Irish government has honored **U2**, **RORY GALLAGHER**, **VAN MORRISON** and late Thin Lizzy frontman **PHIL LYNOTT** with a set of stamps called Irish Rock Legends.

KISS will perform a concert this February in Australia with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

Word!

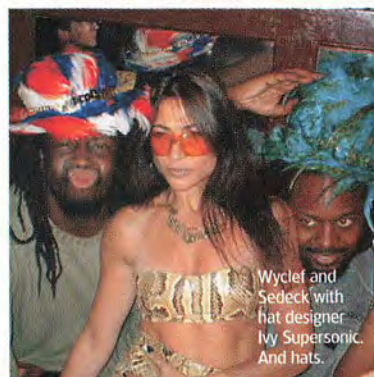


I feel like I'm eating someone's colon.

LL COOL J, ON WHY HE WON'T EAT PORK OR SCALLOPS



Sedeck Jean (left) to brother Wyclef: "Gimme that bottle — or else!"



Wyclef and Sedeck with hat designer Ivy Supersonic. And hats.



Carmine Appice (center) and "friends"

Surprise!

Wyclef Jean gets birthday shocker: a party and a hat!

★ SEVERAL HUNDRED friends, family members and naked dancers gathered in New York's Bowery Bar on October 16 to throw a surprise birthday party for Wyclef Jean and his brother, Sedeck. Wyclef turned 30 on October 17; Sedeck turned 28 five days later.

Organized by New York hat designer Ivy Silberstein (a.k.a. Ivy Supersonic), the boozefest attracted Denzel Washington, Lenny Kravitz, Naomi Campbell and '70s überdrummer Carmine Appice. Silberstein also presented the birthday boys with handmade hats: red-white-and-blue for Wyclef, and green-and-blue for Sedeck.

As the celebration got rowdier, Wyclef and Sedeck left their gifts in the care of "Beef," their security guard. **CLARISSA LASKY**



Daly: "Come in — I just put on a fresh pot"

MR. ROCK & ROLL? NOT ANYMORE — CARSON DALY IS NOW ... MR. COFFEE!

➤➤ **CARSON DALY** — the face of MTV's *Total Request Live* and NBC's late-night talk show *Last Call With Carson Daly*, and pal of Limp Bizkit frontman Fred Durst — is now the pitchman for Mr. Coffee. Daly is appearing in national print ads celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of the coffeemaker giant. According to Nielsen, ratings for *TRL* have plunged 15 percent over the last year. **THOMAS PAYNE**

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LOSIN' IT?



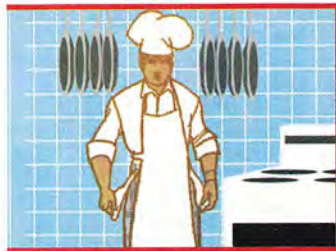
Britney Spears's New York restaurant, Nyla, has gone to hell in a handbasket! Here's how...



IN EARLY OCTOBER, Nyla patron Mark Zucco is stabbed in the back with a knife by another customer following a heated argument.



The same day, three employees are fired without notice. One of the staffers, Jodie Wasserman, complains: "We worked all day, and then were told we weren't employed anymore."



Later that week, Nyla loses its second chef in three months. "There's no one coming into the restaurant now," says the departed chef, Brad Gates. "It's been hard to buy food because they're not giving me any money."



In July, three female students claimed they contracted food poisoning — resulting in vomiting and diarrhea — after eating at Nyla. A subsequent New York City Board of Health crackdown ensued. **ROB KEMP**

News Roundup!

The British rock band Muse threatened to sue Canadian diva **CELINE DION** for unauthorized use of their name in her new Las Vegas stage show, *Celine Dion Muse*. After the band refused a \$50,000 settlement that Dion offered, she dropped *Muse* from the show's name altogether and is now calling it *A New Day*...

Carey Kelly, the look-alike brother of beleaguered R&B singer **R. KELLY**, vehemently denied to the *Chicago Sun-Times* that he and not his famous sibling was the one caught on video allegedly having sex with a minor.

Elvis Presley's widow, **PRISCILLA PRESLEY**, says that if the King were alive today, she believes he would be a Scientologist.

Godfather of soul **JAMES BROWN** and country-pop beauty **SHANIA TWAIN** have added their names to the growing list of stars willing to perform at private parties — for \$50,000 and \$300,000, respectively.

Word!



I sat down the wrong way on one of my testicles.

BOBBY BROWN, ON WHY HE WAS RECENTLY RUSHED TO THE HOSPITAL

★ Where Are They Now? ★

Life After Rock



Bruce Murphy [of Men Without Hats]

THEN!

Keyboardist and guitarist,
1987–1992

NOW!

Cosmetic dentist,
Ottawa, Ontario

★ "MEN WITHOUT HATS was one of those odd bands that existed in the ether. We would get together for an album, possibly a tour, then I wouldn't see anybody for a while. The Hats' lineup changed all the time. We joked that everybody in Montreal had played for us.

"When I joined the Hats, I was fizzling out on dentistry. I had been practicing for three years. It wasn't fun; it wasn't exotic. I phoned one of my dentist buddies and said, 'Can you look after my practice?' He said sure.

"I played keyboards and guitar and sang backup vocals. I called myself the utility man. It was an absolute riot. It was the usual things: sex, drugs and rock & roll. That is a huge attraction.

"There were bad parts about it. When you're on a tour bus, it doesn't matter how much the bus cost — it's still a bus. It smells bad and there are the same half-dozen people on it.

"Singer Ivan Doroschuk is a brilliant songwriter. I think we were probably a better band than people gave us credit for. Even

though we did have a fairly successful career after, people always remember 'Safety Dance.' Men Without Hats tended to get pigeonholed as the guys who did a jerky, weird dance and wore pirate shirts.

"I haven't talked to Ivan or his brothers Stefan and Colin in a couple of years. They drift in, they drift out. I never know when they will pop into my life again.

"If it wasn't for Men Without Hats, I don't think I would be doing what I'm doing now. Being on tour and doing the albums we did gave me a chance to step back. I made a promise to myself when I was with Men Without Hats that if I went back to dentistry, I would do it on my terms.

"Now I've gotten my practice to a point where I enjoy what I do.

"I was fizzling out on dentistry."

I concentrate mostly on cosmetic dentistry, and I'm changing people's lives, making them happier.

"People ask, 'When are Men Without Hats getting back together?' I go, 'Y'know, stick a fork in it. It's done. I grew out of it — you can, too.'" AS TOLD TO JON REGARDIE

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Very
Cool



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Useful Tips From the Stars!

HOW TO ...

Shatter Glass
With Your Voice by
Josh Groban

Opera crossover sensation Josh Groban's self-titled debut album is a million-selling Top 10 smash. But now the lanky 21-year-old has had his tonsils removed, and he's ready to do some *real* damage with his vocal cords — starting here, with a bathroom mirror!

AS TOLD TO JON REGARDIE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN STEPHENS

USE CAUTION!

4 You gotta reach down into the depths of hell with your voice.

1 Find the Wussiest Glass!

"People have attempted to break glass with their voice for centuries. A beginner should start with thin glass. Champagne glasses are the easiest to break. I think they're the wussiest glasses. If you try a shot glass, I don't think you'll get very far. I prefer bathroom mirrors."

2 Say *Ahh*!

"When you're doing a concert, you have to project all the way to the back of the theater. You have to take that volume and multiply it by 100, and you might be able to crack the glass. To warm up, I do some scales. I would sing *ahh*, do about two octaves, see how it's going and work from there."

3 Reach for Hell!

"It takes about 1,000 to 10,000 vibrations per second to get glass to break all over the place. It has to be very loud, at exactly the right frequency. You give a primal scream. You gotta reach down into the depths of hell with your voice. You hold it for as long as it takes, baby."

4 Take Desperate Measures!

"If the voice can't do it, it's time to play dirty. I would take one piece of glass I want to break, and hit the first piece of glass with it, so you get the double-glass-breaking action going. It's a little maneuver I've come up with on my own. The glass would come in peace — and go in pieces!"

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→ JOSH GROBAN
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Tim McGraw
with wife
Faith Hill

ABORTION BACKLASH

Country-music radio stations are up in arms over Tim McGraw's abortion-themed "Red Rag Top"

★ CROSSOVER COUNTRY superstar Tim McGraw has ignited a controversy with his single "Red Rag Top," which grapples with the consequences of abortion.

"Abortion is the most divisive issue in our nation, and it is a very hot topic in this part of the country," said Ron Brooks, the program director of Columbia, South Carolina, radio station WCOS, which banned the song immediately upon its release in September. "I think it is bad business to play a song that is likely to alienate 40 percent to 50 percent of the audience."

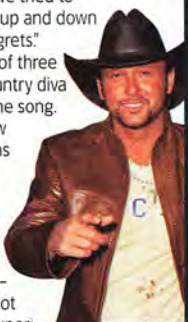
Kevin O'Neal, the program director for Nashville's influential WSM-FM, told *Blender* that the day the song was released to radio, he yanked it off the station's playlist after only four spins. However, due to McGraw's popularity, he later reinstated it.

The lyrics include: "We were young and wild/We decided not to have a child/So we did what we did and we tried to forget/And we swore up and down there would be no regrets."

McGraw, a father of three who is married to country diva Faith Hill, stands by the song.

"It gives you a view into somebody's life as he looks back on the choices he made," McGraw wrote on his official Web site.

A representative for McGraw told *Blender*, "The song does not address a personal experience in [his] past." **ROB KEMP**



"Howdy."

"Abortion is the most divisive issue."

News Roundup!

Porn superstar **JENNA JAMESON** served the Los Angeles-based *myfindit.com* with a cease-and-desist order over a promotion the site was running, which claimed users could get a sneak peek at a video of Jameson engaging in sexual activities with **BRITNEY SPEARS**.

After being separated for three months, Latin star **MARC ANTHONY** and his wife plan to renew their wedding vows in December in Puerto Rico.

AUDIOSLAVE, the supergroup made up of former Soundgarden frontman **CHRIS CORNELL** and members of **RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE**, has paid an unsigned British band with the same name \$30,000 for use of the moniker; the British act will still be allowed to use it.

SHAKIRA swept the first MTV Latin Awards recently, winning artist of the year, video of the year, female artist of the year, pop artist of the year and best artist North.

Word!



I do it 100 percent for the money.

SIMON COWELL, ON BEING AN **AMERICAN IDOL** JUDGE

★ In the Studio



OutKast's Andre 3000 (left) and Big Boi (right) with studio engineer Warren Bletcher

"The Madness!"

That's what Big Boi of OutKast calls the 20 blunts a day he uses as "fuel" to help in recording three new CDs — simultaneously!

★ "I ROLL 20 BLUNTS before I get to the studio," explains Antwan "Big Boi" Patton, half of Atlanta's premier hip-hop duo, OutKast. "That's the fuel to the madness!"

The fuel certainly seems to be working. *Blender* had arranged to speak with Big Boi and his OutKast better half, Andre "Dre" Benjamin, about the duo's long-awaited follow-up to 2000's triple-platinum *Stankonia*. Instead, to the great surprise of both *Blender* and the duo's record label, the two have been spending most of their time working on solo albums.

"We're doing separate albums," Dre confirmed. "Big Boi is coming up with his album at the top of the year — and an Andre 3000 record [is due out] in the fall [2003]. We're

working kind of separate, but both of us are on each other's albums."

Big Boi's CD, *Speakerbox*, due out in February, features cameos from Jay-Z and Mary J. Blige, and the return of Khujo of Goodie Mob, who was severely injured in a car accident in Atlanta last June.

"It's his first time back in the booth since he had one of his legs amputated," Big Boi says.

Dre's album — which will double as the soundtrack to a yet-to-be-made OutKast film — will be a more guitar-oriented rock & roll record, drawing on his newest inspiration.

"The Hives are my favorite band on the planet right now — they are killing everything!" Dre enthuses. "They made me want to pick up my guitar a little more." **ROB KEMP**

ALSO IN THE STUDIO



Godsmack: "Who's up for a love song?"

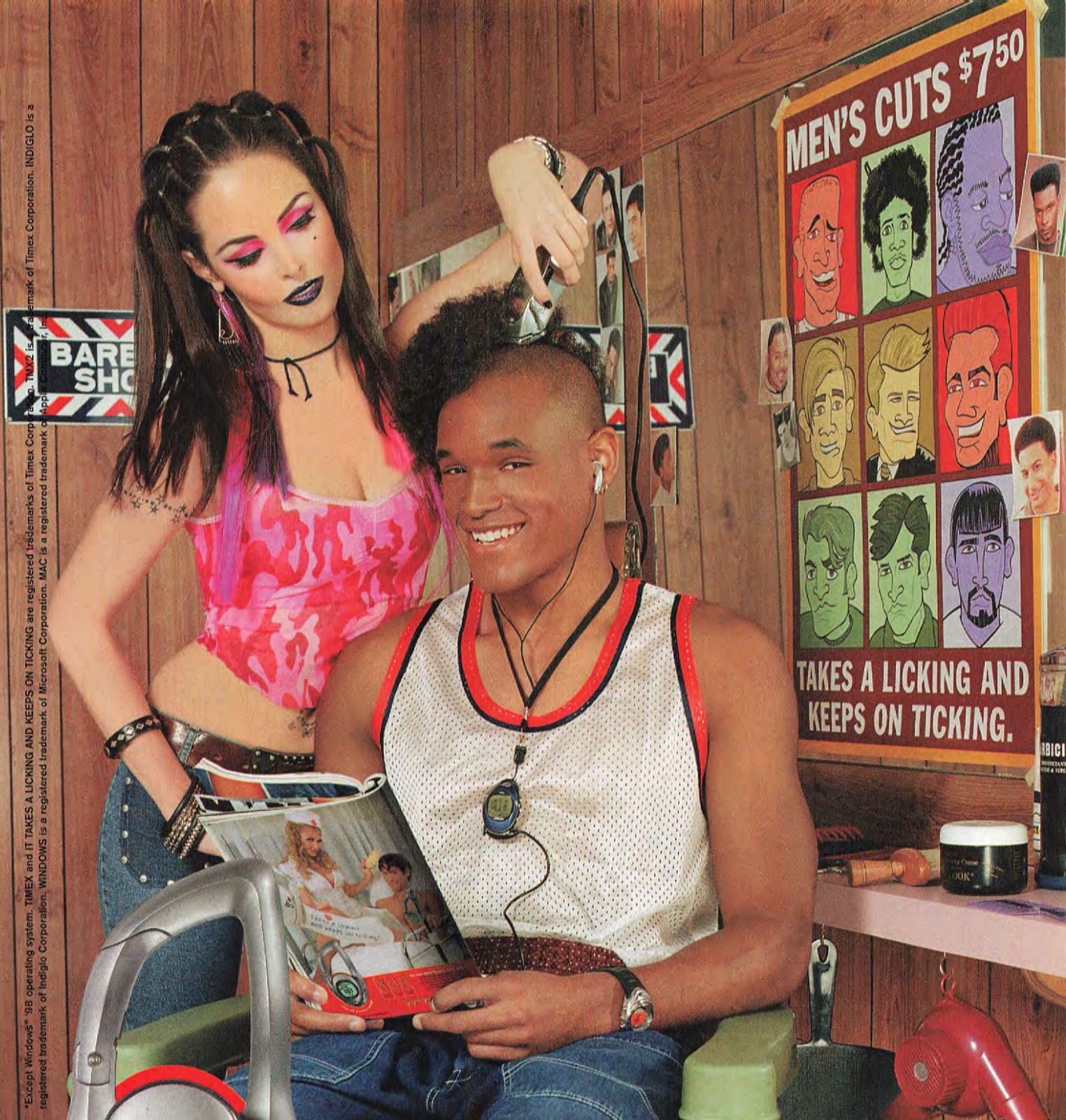
Boston metal quartet **GODSMACK** are currently recording the follow-up to 2000's *Awake*, at the Criterion/Hit Factory studio in Miami. The album is due out in April 2003. ...

A reunited **JANE'S ADDICTION** — singer Perry Farrell, guitarist Dave Navarro and drummer Stephen Perkins — are recording their first album since 1990's *Ritual de lo Habitual*. No release date is set. ...

Hip-hop funnyman **REDMAN** is recording the successor to 2001's *Malpractice*, featuring cameos from Ludacris, Ghostface Killah, Keith Murray and Nate Dogg. ...

Alt-country superstar **LUCINDA WILLIAMS** has recorded 15 tracks with producer Mark Howard (Bob Dylan/U2) at Reel Life Studios in Los Angeles. The new album is set for release in spring 2003. ...

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★ What's in Your Bag?



Hey, MC Paul Barman — let a smile be your umbrella!

MC PAUL BARMAN

At home in New York City with the rapper behind "Cock Mobster"



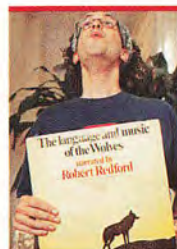
BOB DYLAN THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'

"When I was listening to this last September [2001], one thing that really knocked me out was 'With God on Our Side.' I never, ever cry, which is kind of a problem I have, but I almost did then."



BOOGIE DOWN PRODUCTIONS BY ALL MEANS NECESSARY

"[Illegal Business] has this scratching of Fat Albert going, 'What can we get for 63 cents?' Is he poor? Selling drugs? Or just asking because it sounds good?"



THE LANGUAGE AND MUSIC OF THE WOLVES NARRATED BY ROBERT REDFORD

"You could get good at howling like a wolf — like bird calls. 'Where is Mom?' or 'I'm so confused — I'm a newborn wolf!'"



RAP ARCHIVES LEGENDS, VOL. 1

"LL Cool J performing 'Rock the Bells' at his own eighteenth birthday party — incredible! I kept calling the record store, asking if Volume 2 had come out yet, and they'd be like, 'No!'"

→ MC PAUL BARMAN'S NEW ALBUM IS PAULLELUJAH (COUP D'ETAT)

News Roundup!

KID ROCK's personal assistant, Kevin Joseph McMahon, 36, was arrested in West Palm Beach, Florida, after a drug-sniffing dog boarded Rock's tour bus and found cocaine, rolling papers, a joint and \$3,717 in cash stashed in a metal briefcase that belonged to McMahon. The rap-rock star was not present.

MARILYN MANSON will provide the musical score for the upcoming remake of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*.

MICK JAGGER donated \$150,000 to his former school, the Dartford Grammar School in Kent County, England, to encourage children to study music.

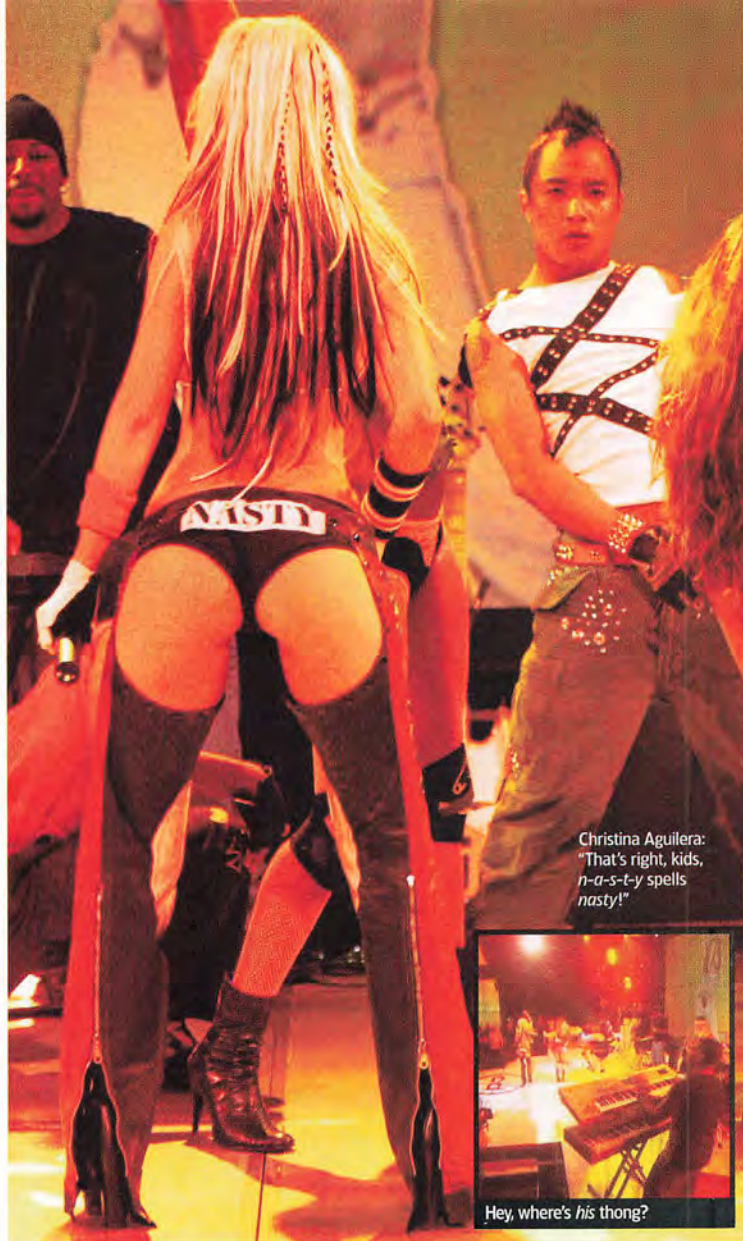
Ex-Metallica bassist **JASON NEWSTED** has joined progressive metal band Voivod and will be performing under the name Jasonic.

Word!



It's America. We're not living in a socialist society where we're all paid so low and no one can afford it.

MICK JAGGER DEFENDS HIGH ROLLING STONES TICKET PRICES



Christina Aguilera: "That's right, kids, n-a-s-t-y spells nasty!"

Hey, where's his thong?

"HEY, KIDS!"

Christina Aguilera lets a bunch of children check out her hot new outfit — a thong!

★ **CHRISTINA AGUILERA** shocked the 1.5 million viewers of a Saturday-morning British children's TV show when she performed her controversial new single, "Dirty," in a thong.

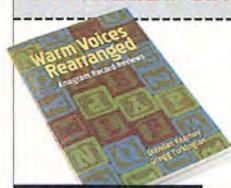
Newly rechristened Xtina, the scantily clad Aguilera made an appearance on the variety show

CD:UK at 11:30 A.M. on October 12. She did not rehearse beforehand.

"It was a first for sure," said one of the stunned producers of the show, which has previously featured other top pop stars Kylie Minogue, Shakira and Justin Timberlake.

Aguilera's new album, *Stripped*, was released October 29. **CLARISSA LASKY**

POP MUSIC'S GREAT ALBUMS REVIEWED BY REARRANGING THEIR LETTERS!



"Read me!"

DEF LEPPARD
HYSTERIA
Hype if pal's retarded.

EMINEM
THE SLIM SHADY LP
Simply, he's the male mind!

ENYA THE CELTS
Cheesy talent.

HOT TUNA BURGERS
Return as bought!

ROLLING STONES
BRIDGES TO BABYLON
Gross, bony, benign old lot. Table, sir?

THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS
SEVERE TIRE DAMAGE
I detest the yammering thieves' garbage.

YES TIME AND A WORD
Weed is mandatory.

From *Warm Voices Rearranged: Anagram Record Reviews*, by Brandon Kearney and Gregg Turkington (Drag City, 2002, \$12). Reprinted with permission.

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Tell Us a Joke!

VANESSA CARLTON

WHAT'S THE difference between a woman and a fridge? A fridge doesn't fart when you take the meat out.

AS TOLD TO MIKE OXLEY



Obits

BEECHER RAY KIRBY

90, October 17, in Nashville, of a lengthy illness. Known as Bashful Brother Oswald, Kirby was an innovator of the Dobro guitar and member of Roy Acuff's Smoky Mountain Boys.

DEREK BELL

66, October 15, in Phoenix, of a heart disorder. A member of the Chieftains since 1972, Bell was a child prodigy who wrote his first concerto at age 12. He was regarded as one of the world's leading harpists.

MICKY NEWBURY

62, September 29, in Springfield, Oregon, of emphysema. Singer-songwriter whose 1972 Civil War medley "An American Trilogy" was a minor pop hit. Elvis Presley made the arrangement a centerpiece of his '70s concerts.

RAY CONNIFF

85, October 12, in San Diego, after falling and hitting his head. Bandleader and arranger who capitalized on anti-rock tastes with a series of easy-listening albums. He placed 37 records in the *Billboard* Top 100 between 1957 and 1973.

ERIC HOSKINS

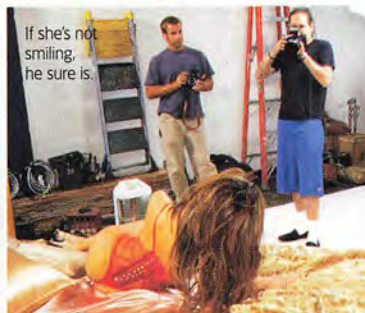
38, October 3, in the Bronx, New York, of liver cancer. Known as Money Ray, Hoskins replaced an original member of the Cold Crush Brothers in 1988 after spending eight years dancing with the group as one of the Smurf Twins.



Deven Davis to Jonathan Davis: "Uh, honey? The lens cap's still on."



David Draitman's patented "just add water" technique



If she's not smiling, he sure is.

Say Cheese!

Playboy invites Korn and Disturbed frontmen to step behind the lens — to photograph naked ladies, of course!

★ KORN'S JONATHAN DAVIS and Disturbed's David Draitman each dropped by *Playboy* offices recently to offer their services as celebrity guest photographers.

Draitman took shots of "Cyber Girl" Gina Patrone in *playboy.com*'s Chicago headquarters, and Davis popped by the magazine's Santa Monica, California, offices with his own subject in tow — his fiancée, former porn star Deven Davis.

Draitman's life? Better than yours



Playboy. Jonathan Davis told *Blender*. "It was an awesome opportunity for her to do that, and for me to take pictures of her in that setting. They're tasteful. She doesn't look whorish or slutty."

"She only made three girl-girl movies anyway," Davis quickly pointed out.

After the Chicago shoot, Draitman and Patrone had a couple of cocktails together in the lounge of the W Hotel across the street from the *Playboy* office.

"I tried to see where things might go, because I was very taken with her," the pierced-chinned singer said. "But she was being very virtuous. She has a boyfriend — and I'm not about to jump all over another man's lawn." **ROB KEMP**



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look at the camera has
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SOLVING YOUR POP CONUNDRUMS SINCE 2001



Beck never sticks his head through bead curtains without protective headgear.

Whatever happened to the Beck album produced by Timbaland I kept hearing so much about last year?

DAN MACRAE, REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN

Don't hold your breath. Their collaboration apparently hasn't proved too fertile; their weird techno cover of David Bowie's "Diamond Dogs," on 2001's *Moulin Rouge* soundtrack, looks like their only release.

Beck sang vocals on "I Am Music," an Aaliyah/Timbaland track, in 2000, but the version on Timbaland & Magoo's 2001 album, *Indecent Exposure*, features no skinny white boys whatsoever. The pair has also discussed doing an album of Devo covers — check your local store's YEAH, RIGHT section.

Did punk-rock sicko G.G. Allin die from a drug overdose or a subdural hematoma? The rumors are enough to drive me mad!

TRAVIS BROWNE, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

"A subdural hematoma"? Good thing you med students have time to ponder notorious punk-rock deaths. Filth merchant G.G. Allin definitely died at age 37 with his veins chock full of heroin and cocaine following a gig at New York's Gas Station in June 1993.

After attacking the audience and smearing himself in his own excrement — as usual — Allin walked through some (closed) French windows and incited his fans to throw bottles at cops.

He died later at a party, surrounded by sleeping friends. Following his instructions, his body was arranged for the funeral clad in a jockstrap, dog collar and sneakers. Mourners were invited to inspect his notoriously small penis and take pictures. After all, it's what G.G. would have wanted.

Who was the first artist to appear on MTV Unplugged?

JACOB WEINSTEIN, BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS

Squeeze. Or, more accurately, Squeeze's songwriters, Chris Difford and Glenn Tilbrook, sharing the stage with singer-songwriter Syd Straw and the Cars' Elliot Easton on October 31, 1989.

Unplugged's original format taped live acoustic performances by like-minded artists: Joe Satriani with Stevie Ray Vaughan, Joe Walsh with Dr. John and, less illustriously, Ratt with Vixen.

Difford and Tilbrook, overlooking the show's title, showed up with electric guitars and caused a last-minute dash around Manhattan in search of two six-strings untainted by pickups.



Led Zeppelin's original lineup — maybe? Clockwise from left: Page, Moon, Marriott, Entwistle

I heard that the original lineup for Led Zeppelin was going to be Keith Moon, Jimmy Page, John Entwistle on bass and vocals, and some guy on organ. That sounds like a hell of a lineup, but is it true?

BENTON GRAYSON, MARYVILLE, MISSOURI

Sort of. In 1966, Moon and Page played on Jeff Beck's "Beck's Bolero," with John Paul Jones on bass and Nicky Hopkins on keyboards. They discussed forming a band, but when they approached

vocalist Steve Marriott of the Small Faces, his manager, Don Arden — Sharon Osbourne's dad — reportedly asked Page if he could play guitar with his fingers broken. Two years later, Moon and Entwistle groused to Richard Cole, the road manager of Page's band the Yardbirds, about wanting to quit the Who, and they idly discussed starting a band with Page and Steve Winwood. (Cole later said Entwistle remarked, "It'll fucking go over like a lead balloon.")

I remember hearing that Tim Finn, of Split Enz and Crowded House, once rescued Eddie Vedder from drowning. I always wondered about that one.

HILARY ALLEN, DENVER

Talk about a fish story. In 1995, Vedder and Finn, surfing in New Zealand, were carried 250 feet offshore. Lifeguards rescued them, and Vedder invited his wet-suited saviors to a gig as thanks.

Pearl Jam guitarist Stone Gossard reckons that Vedder was never in danger. Lifeguards were "hauling people out every 40 seconds," Gossard has said. "But when you're as famous as Eddie Vedder, it turns into a big story."



Shoddy lawn care always amuses Eddie Vedder.

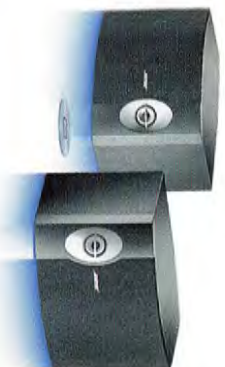
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Free Bird

Fights in the studio! Naked stage-crashing! Death on a motorcycle! All this and more helped a bunch of good ol' boys from Florida named **Lynyrd Skynyrd** come up with the best-known epic in American rock & roll.

IN JULY 1974, Lynyrd Skynyrd, a Southern-boogie rock band from Jacksonville, Florida, scored their only Top 10 smash with "Sweet Home Alabama," a country-inflected anthem. It was a good start, but Skynyrd's follow-up single, "Free Bird," stalled at number 19 the next January.

Such a performance might have been disappointing, but "Free Bird" has emerged as the great American teen anthem, particularly in the South, where it's played with reverence at high-school proms, graduations and funerals. Within a year of its release, the 11-minute "Free Bird" had succeeded Led Zeppelin's "Stairway to Heaven" as the most requested track on FM radio, and the two songs still stand as the twin epics of the classic-rock format.

"When we wrote it," notes Lynyrd Skynyrd guitarist Gary Rossington, "we had no idea that it was anything more than a sweet little love song. We had no idea what it would become."

"Free Bird" took flight as early as 1969. As Rossington recalls it, the song's bare bones were assembled by guitarist Allen Collins, who

played the chord sequence repeatedly at rehearsals, in dressing rooms and other band hangouts.

"[Vocalist] Ronnie [Van Zant] thought at first that it had too many chords to write lyrics for it," Rossington says, "but after a few months, we were sitting around, and he asked Allen to play those chords again. After about 20 minutes, Ronnie started singing, 'If I leave here tomorrow,' and it fit great. It wasn't anything heavy — just a love song about leavin' town, time to move on."

The version of "Free Bird" Skynyrd played in clubs and bars throughout the South was far removed from the epic that would entrance a generation. "At first, we didn't have the fast part at the end, with the three guitars jamming," Rossington says. "It was after playing it in clubs, where we needed to extend the material because we didn't have enough songs, that it started to evolve. I think I came up with the three chords at the end, so Allen could play some lead."

The earliest version of "Free Bird" was recorded in Jacksonville, but "that didn't have Billy Powell's

piano part on it, because Billy wasn't in the band," Rossington says. "He was our roadie back then. After about a year with us, he showed us how he played 'Free Bird' on the piano, and it was beautiful. So we got him in the band."

At live shows, the song took on a special poignancy after October 1971, when Duane Allman, leader of Jacksonville heroes the Allman Brothers, was killed in a motorcycle crash. "It wasn't written as a tribute to Duane Allman, but when we would play it, we would dedicate it to Duane, and Ronnie would say, 'He's a free bird now.'"

With the song becoming a live favorite, a second version incorporating Powell's sonata-like piano was recorded in Muscle Shoals, Alabama. But it still didn't set the world alight. Alan Walden, Skynyrd's manager at the time, has recalled how the song got rejected by nine record companies: "Atlantic, Columbia, Warners, A&M, RCA, Epic, Elektra, Polydor and even Capricorn all passed after hearing 'Free Bird,' 'Gimme Three Steps,' 'Simple Man,' 'I Ain't the One' and about 12 other originals. Their comments were, 'They sound too much like the Allman Brothers!'"

In 1972, Al Kooper saw Skynyrd tear the house down in Atlanta, and signed them to MCA. "As far as I was concerned, they were green, recordingwise," Kooper remembers. "I taught them how to use the studio."

Kooper was fired up with ideas about reshaping the raw material of "Free Bird," but the band wasn't immediately receptive. In 1976, Van Zant told Britain's *Melody Maker* that Skynyrd and Kooper fought incessantly: "Al was very hard to get along with in the studio. It had to be

VITAL STATISTICS

SONG
"FREE BIRD"

ARTIST
LYNYRD SKYNYRD

LABEL
SOUNDS OF THE SOUTH/MCA

PERFORMERS
RONNIE VAN ZANT
VOCALS
ALLEN COLLINS
GUITAR
GARY ROSSINGTON
GUITAR
ED KING
BASS
BOB BURNS
DRUMS
BILLY POWELL
PIANO
AL KOOPER
ORGAN

PRODUCER
AL KOOPER

RELEASED
NOVEMBER 23,
1974

HIGHEST CHART POSITION
19

WHO'S WHO?



RONNIE VAN ZANT
Ruled Lynyrd Skynyrd with an iron fist. Killed in a 1977 plane crash with Skynyrd's Steven and Cassie Gaines.



GARY ROSSINGTON
Formed the Rossington-Collins Band after the crash. Now plays with re-formed Skynyrd lineup.



AL KOOPER
Bob Dylan sideman and founder of Blood, Sweat & Tears. Still an active musician; lectured at Boston's Berklee College of Music.



ALAN WALDEN
Lynyrd Skynyrd's first manager, and a significant booking agent and entrepreneur in the South. Also was manager of Otis Redding.





Sidewalk survivors, from left: Leon Wilkeson, Billy Powell, Ronnie Van Zant, Gary Rossington, Bob Burns, Allen Collins, Ed King

his way, or that was it. No compromise, and that just wasn't cuttin' it with us."

Even so, Rossington acknowledges Kooper's significant contributions. "Al put the organ on the front, which was a very good idea. He also helped me get the sound of the delayed slide guitar that I play — it's actually me playing the same thing twice, recording one on top of the other, so it sounds kind of slurry, echoey."

What had started as a simple love song had become a baroque masterpiece featuring intricate keyboard parts, studio trickery and an extended triple-guitar jam session that added up to a commercially untenable 11 minutes. Against the band's wishes, MCA optimistically released a four-minute "Free Bird" radio edit, although, as Rossington points out, many FM stations ignored it and played the full-length album track.

The song was always the closer at Lynyrd Skynyrd concerts, and it



Gary Rossington flares jeans, hair, nostrils

prompted some freaky behavior. Fans in England once rushed the stage during "Free Bird" — and politely lay down onstage, according to Gene Odom, the band's security manager, in his new memoir, *Lynyrd Skynyrd*. And a naked man once jumped onstage in Little Rock, Arkansas, slinking off after a spotlight was trained on him.

Today, "Sweet Home Alabama" is still Lynyrd Skynyrd's biggest hit,

but "Free Bird" remains their essential track — particularly since the horrific night of October 20, 1977. Three days after the release of their album *Street Survivors*, Skynyrd's tour plane crashed en route to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, killing Van Zant; guitarist Steve Gaines; Gaines's sister, backup singer Cassie Gaines; and assistant road manager Dean Kilpatrick, as well as the pilots. The classic status of "Free Bird" was sealed.

Nowadays, "Free Bird" is everywhere. The song bequeathed its name to a 1996 live concert movie, and there's a Skynyrd-themed Freebird Cafe in Jacksonville Beach. Of course, the song is also an enduring punch line at concerts: Whether it's Metallica, Neil Diamond or Britney Spears onstage, there's always some wise-ass in the crowd who's shouting for the band to play "Free Bird." Apparently, that's a joke that, just like the song itself, never seems to grow old. *JOHNNY BLACK*



YOU SEND QUESTIONS, WE GET ANSWERS. WHO LOVES YA, BABY?

Justin Timberlake

He's the 'N Sync frontman-turned-solo star with an image that couldn't be more squeaky-clean. At least, that was the case before you decided to ask him about legalizing marijuana, breaking up with Britney and kicking Eminem's ass. . . .

BY CLARK COLLIS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY TONY DURAN

★ **"LESBIANS!"** WHOOPS 21-year-old Justin Timberlake, watching a trailer for the new season of MTV's *Real World* in a New York recording studio. "And people getting pregnant! You know, I think this is going to be the raciest season yet."

If the 'N Sync singer's enthusiasm for the show seems a little over the top, that's nothing compared to his excitement over his debut solo album, *Justified*.

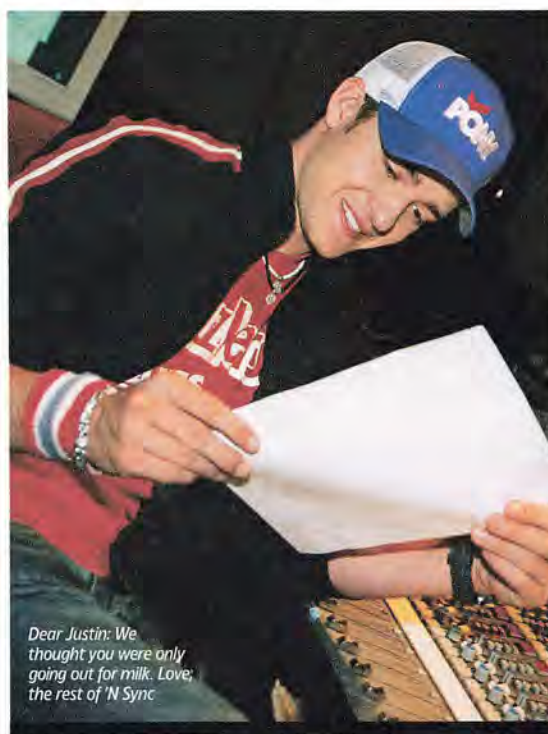
"I think it's got something for everybody," he says of the record, which is largely produced by megastar beatmasters the Neptunes. "It's got that retro-rock, Steve Miller, Eagles-type thing. But it also has elements of Prince and Michael."

The only time the heartthrob comes across as less than bubbly is when faced with questions from *Blender* readers about his former relationship with Britney Spears.

"I called her not too long ago just to say hi," he admits. "We still talk once in a while. We're friends."

Which is more than he can say about Creed frontman Scott Stapp.

"I do not like that guy," he snaps. "'N Sync were in a club one time, and he walked up and slapped two of the guys really hard on the back. I was thinking, 'If he hits me like that, I'm going to fuck him up!'"



Dear Justin: We thought you were only going out for milk. Love, the rest of 'N Sync

If 'N Sync were the Red Hot Chili Peppers, who would need the biggest tube sock?

NATRICH, BAYSIDE, NEW YORK

[Laughs] Well, you know I'm going to say myself. I don't know, man. We're close, but we're not that close. I can honestly say that I've never seen Joey, Chris, Lance or JC's penis.

When did you last speak to Britney?

LITTLE JANE, MIAMI BEACH

The last time I had a conversation with her was the day after the MTV Awards. I'm fascinated that people actually care about that.

What would be the highlight of a Justin Timberlake *MTV Cribs*?

DLASK9, NEW YORK

Which one, the Orlando house or the

L.A. house? The Orlando house would be the backyard, because my backyard is a small golf course. It's like a chip-and-putt. Two and a half acres right on the lake. I have tee boxes up by the pool. It's beautifully landscaped. I had a company that makes greens come in and do it.

Are you a tits or ass kind of guy?

DONJANE, MILFORD, PENNSYLVANIA

Ass, definitely.

What do you think was the single most egregious piece of 'N Sync merchandising?

VINYL20, WALNUT, CALIFORNIA

That freakin' bubblegum. Was it bubblegum or lip balm? We didn't even OK it. I'm telling you, man, that merchandising company is lucky, because I wanted to sue the crap out of them. We never agreed to do anything like that; they just put the stuff out. I found it in the store one day, and I said, "What the hell is this?" Let me tell you, it's a nasty business, that music business.

Are you really dating Alyssa Milano? And, if not, can I?

CHRISD, NEWBURGH, IOWA

I'm dating . . . a lot of people. You know, I think when you say you're dating someone, that means you're specifically *with* them — as far as the world is concerned. I guess I'm single right now.

Do you think your 'N Sync bandmate Chris Kirkpatrick ought to kick Eminem's ass?

JIGGERS99, JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY

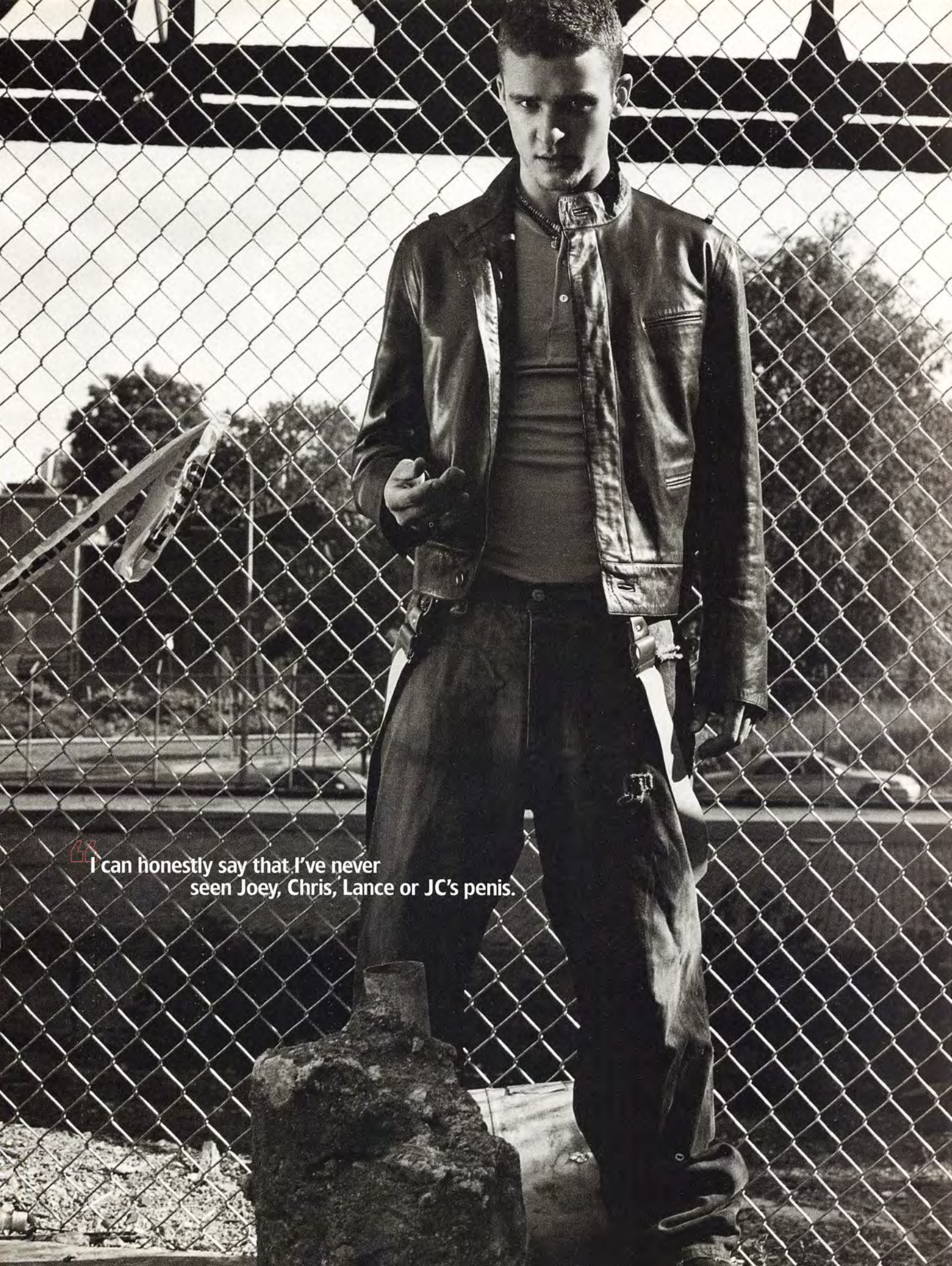
I don't think he ought to. There's no reason to get bent out of shape about something Eminem says. But I think if they were in a fight, Chris would kick his ass. Chris is a tough little . . . Chris is tough. And he has a →

Dear Superstar

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28

I can honestly say that I've never
seen Joey, Chris, Lance or JC's penis.



Justin and Alyssa Milano: "Hurry up, you slacker!"

Napoleon complex too, so he's extra tough. His toughness comes from the heart, because he was always the little guy at school — so he always had to stick up for himself.

Have you ever read any of the Internet fiction about all the 'N Sync guys getting it on with one another?

DUNE3, HOUSTON

I'm not a big Internet junkie. I'm very computer stupid. But, to refer back to the earlier question, I can honestly say that I've never seen Joey, Lance, JC or Chris's penis.

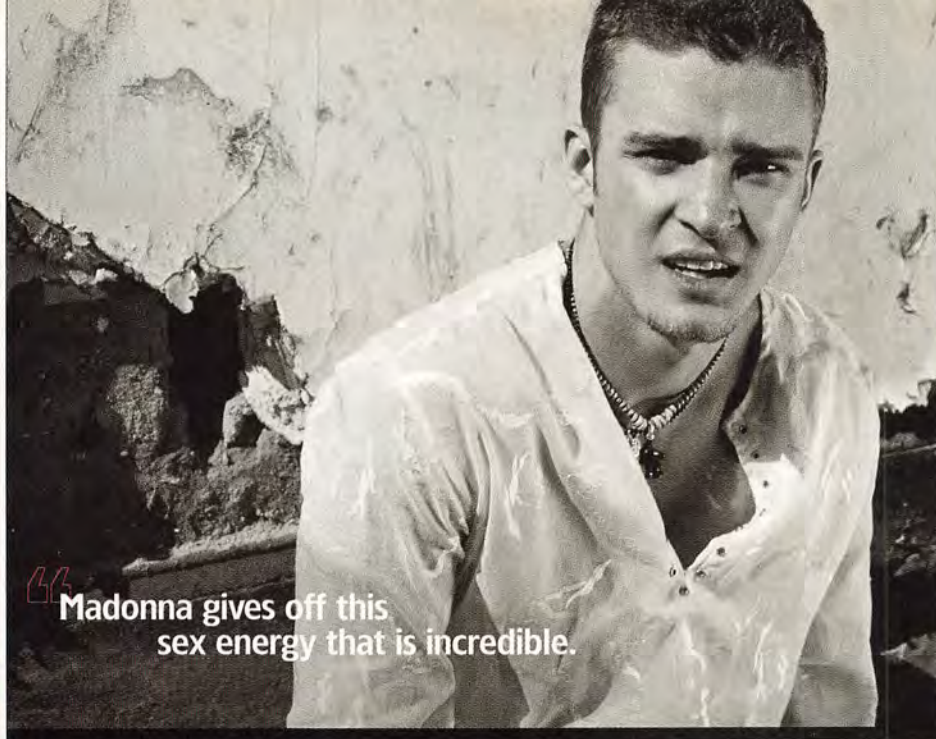
Would you and Britney sit around and laugh at what the tabloids were writing about you?

JJ4VR, COLUMBUS, OHIO

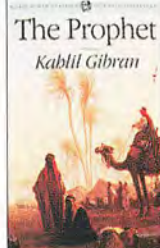
Yeah, you have to. I still laugh. I've been linked to everybody under the sun. Apparently even the guys in 'N Sync! [Blender explains that's just our readers' imaginations.] OK, OK. I get it, you sick bastards! No, that whole thing being linked to Alyssa and Janet and Britney and . . . everybody. That whole thing is just funny.



Age 3: "Hey, I said no photos!"



Madonna gives off this sex energy that is incredible.



The Prophet: We haven't read it either.

What was the last book you read?

KATIE2H, WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA

I'm reading something right now called *The Prophet* [by early-twentieth-century poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran]. It's kind of poetic. I like self-help books. I like books that I feel I got something from that I can apply to my life.

My 5-year-old nephew named his hamster Justin in your honor. What's the weirdest thing like that that a fan's ever done?

TESS000, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

As long as it doesn't have anything to do with the Britney snake. . . . The weirdest thing I've ever seen was a tattoo this girl had of me on her whole arm. From her shoulder bone all the way down to her forearm, she had a portrait of me. Initially, I was a bit stunned. I saw it when I was onstage, and it broke up my whole freakin' routine. I didn't know what to do. And then I look over and she's got JC all over her other arm.



Joey Fatone has really let himself go.



Hello, dolly!

What CDs are you playing on your stereo right now?

KIM321850, CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

I'm enthused by so many different things. But right now I can't get Coldplay out of my stereo. I think they're the greatest band of this generation — it's between Coldplay and Radiohead.

If Madonna wasn't married, would you make a move?

2X2XR33, MIAMI

Come on . . . of course! That older-woman thing is not a problem — it's a blessing! I met Madonna one time. She was working in a dance studio next to mine. She gives off this sex energy that is incredible. At the risk of sounding clichéd, it's on this whole other deep level. I was completely aroused . . . in every way.

If you were president, would you legalize marijuana?

TIMBOTWO, NEW YORK

Of course I would — it would cut your crime rate in half. All the stoners I know are too paranoid to do anything stupid.

You're obsessed with sneakers, aren't you? Do you have a foot fetish or something? How many pairs of them do you own?

LALAKELL, PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

An incredible amount. A lot. I gave half of them away to the Salvation Army, and I probably still have around 800 pairs. Sneaker companies have found out that I collect them, so they send me all these free sneakers. That's obviously the best thing about doing what I do — all the free stuff, all the swag. →



'N Sync play on despite freakishly strong breeze.



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★ JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE

Is there a lot of pressure on you to be well-behaved?

POPOUE2928, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Not at all. If there is, I don't know about it. Honestly, man, I'm not going to sit here and say that I'm an angel, but I'm not the devil.

What movies can you recite lines of dialogue from?

ERZT, SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

Ferris Bueller's Day Off is the first one that comes to mind. That's my favorite movie. "Pardon my French, but Cameron is so tight that if you stuck a lump of coal up his ass, in two weeks you'd have a diamond." I could go on forever. They're talking about doing a sequel — are you serious? I could be his son!

Do you have any 'N Sync dolls around the house?

IN-LOVE-21, VENICE, CALIFORNIA

Hell, no! That's freaky, dude. Scary.

You get pretty hot 'n' heavy with that girl in the video for "Like I Love You." Has anyone ever told you that you're one lucky bastard?

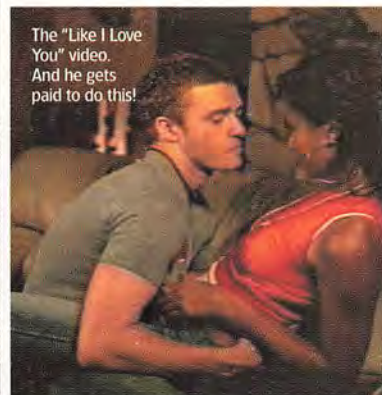
LULUSMITHS, LUBBOCK, TEXAS

Yeah, I enjoyed every second of that. I wanted to keep the video simple, because I wanted the emphasis to be on the dancing and the interaction between me and the girl. I didn't want any CGI [special-effects] shots. I'll save that for something that feels a little bit bigger. To me the song feels kind of vintage, very bare. I compare it to Prince's band, or the Time in the year 3000. That's what it sounds like to me.

Do you think *Blender* was justified in naming 'N Sync's former manager, Lou Pearlman, as one of Rock's 25



Justin always saves his best moves for parking lots.



The "Like I Love You" video. And he gets paid to do this!

"I'm not going to sit here and say I'm an angel."



A rare picture of Lou Pearlman not being sued



Nice vest, Bueller!

Most Dastardly Villains of All Time in the October issue?

TRLESTER6, CORONA, NEW YORK

I saw that. Uh . . . without saying too much . . . yes. What number was he? [Blender tells him 14.] That works.

When was the last time you thought, "I can't afford that?"

JJDBRITNEY, WASHINGTON, D.C.

I never consciously say I can't afford something. But I'm a bargain shopper. I went to go get milk and cereal the other day, and I just decided to go ahead and fill up the refrigerator in my house in Los Angeles with groceries. I really spent three hours at the grocery store. I had my Ralph's Club card, and I was like, "I'm getting a discount, but I have to get the best price — the lowest price!" The checkout girl was giving me this look, like, "Why are you here?"



0.5% of Justin's sneakers

Did you and Britney have "a song"?

SBARR-MANNING, LOS ANGELES

If we did, I wouldn't tell you. Because then I'd have to hear it everywhere I go.

What do you think happens to you when you die?

NSYN1213188, APPLETON, MINNESOTA

I believe in the spiritual afterlife. I believe, in some shape or form, in past-life regression and souls coming back to Earth for unfinished business. You know, when you run into people and you're like, "I know I've met you somewhere"? I think maybe you actually did. I think that's what *soul mates*

means — that you were connected to that person in a past life. I don't know, man. I'll let you know when I get there!

When was the last time you lost your temper?

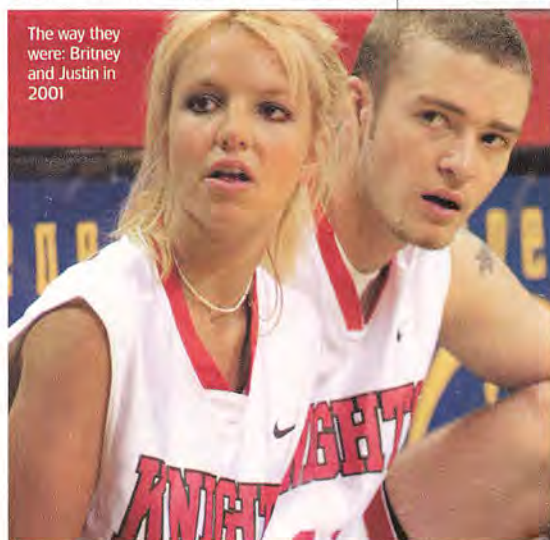
MYSMITTY03, LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA

[Very long pause] In Los Angeles doing interviews. The record company had me for a whole week straight, from 9 o'clock in the morning until 6 o'clock at night, doing foreign press. The first two or three days was U.K. press, so that was great. But then we got into Germany and Spain. It was just like [in the voice of Cartman from South Park], "Screw you guys; I'm going home!" That was a pretty good Cartman, huh?

What do people say when they see you on the street?

CAL69, SEATTLE

"Man, he really looks like Justin Timberlake." [Blender]

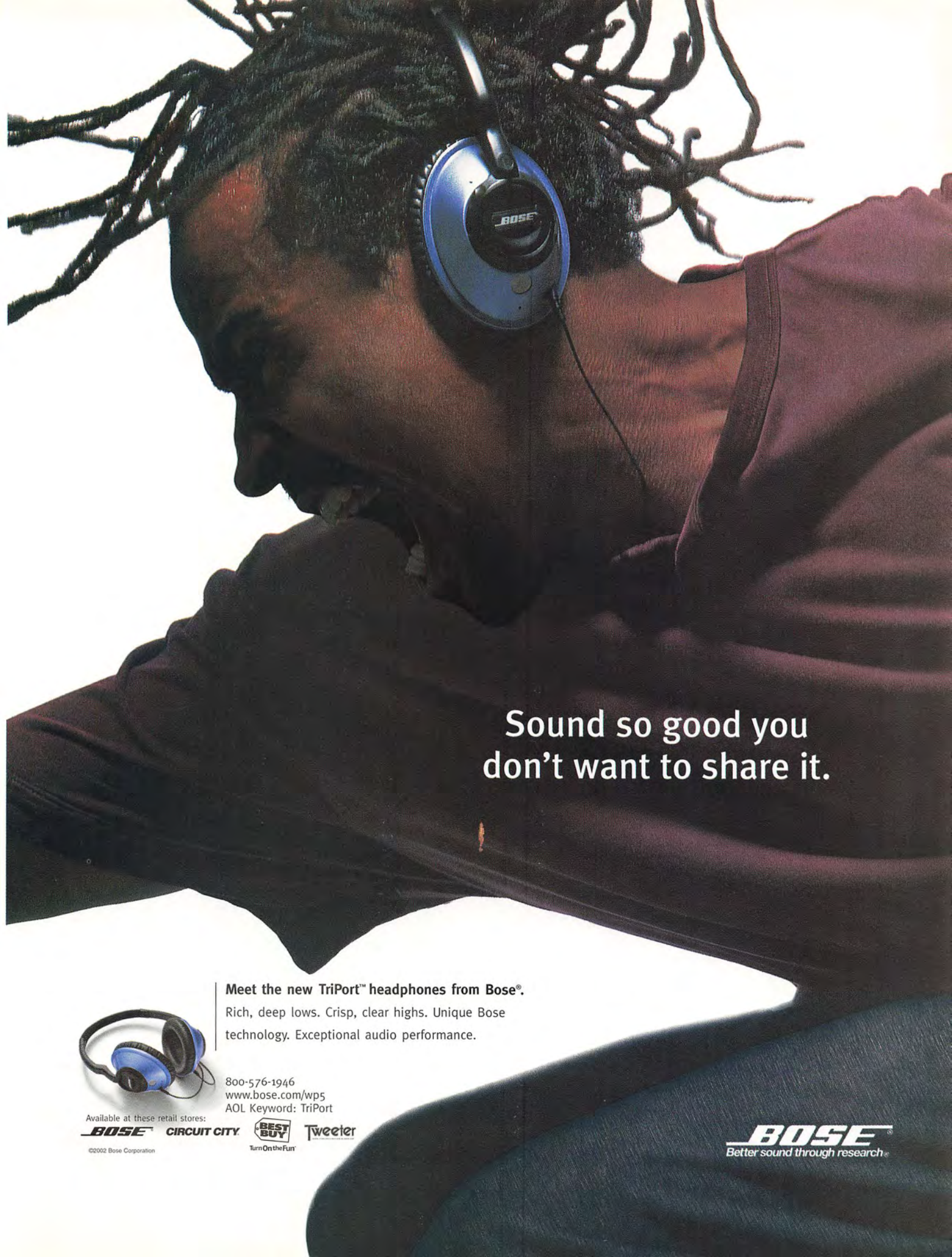


The way they were: Britney and Justin in 2001

"All the stoners I know are too paranoid to do anything stupid."



'N Sync await arrival of *Water Wings*, 1996



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Can They Kick It?

Of course they can! Boozing, womanizing, brawling, upchucking: It's all in a night's work for frisky Canadian rockers **Sum 41**. Join them as they attempt to reconquer America with breezy good humor and a philosophy that decrees, "More, you pussy! Get it while you can!"

BY MICHAEL ODELL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEGO





Crushed nuts, anyone? Sum 41, from left: Steve Jocz, Deryck Whibley, Dave Baksh, Jay McCaslin

ON JOCZ: SHIRT AND SWEATER VEST BY BEN SHERMAN; TIE BY KEITH EDWARDS; CAP BY GORHAM BROTHERS. SOCKS BY THE SOCK MAN. BOXER SHORTS BY Jockey. SNEAKERS BY VANS. ON WHIBLEY: SHIRT BY FRED PERRY; PANTS BY BAUS FRANK. SLIP-ON SHOES BY BATA; SHOES BY DIESEL. SNEAKERS BY BEN SHERMAN. ON BAKSH: SHIRT BY DIESEL. SWEATER VEST BY VANS. PANTS BY HUGO BOSS. ON MCCASLIN: SHIRT BY FRED PERRY. SNEAKERS BY CONVERSE. ON JOCZ: SHIRT BY DIESEL. SWEATER VEST BY HUGO BOSS. PANTS BY HUGO BOSS. SNEAKERS BY CONVERSE. SHIRT BY HUGO BOSS.



OVER THE PAST summer, while recording the follow-up album to their multiplatinum debut, *All Killer No Filler*, Canadian brat-rock foursome Sum 41 felt the need to rededicate themselves to the cause of "rock."

Accordingly, they got some new tattoos: drummer Steve Jocz's tender left arm bears the legend BOMBS AWAY, and singer-guitarist Deryck Whibley's sports a flaming horseshoe. Their new fervor led to some healthy band spats: Jocz's dairy-themed suggestions for the new album's title — *Homage to Fromage* and *Goregonzola* — were rejected in favor of *Does This Look Infected?*

And there were some full-on disasters: Dave Baksh's guitar parts were all recorded out of tune and had to be redone in a frantic three-week marathon of day-and-night power-chording.

Now gathered in New York to unveil the new music to *Blender*, Sum 41 are confident it will be the perfect soundtrack for the lives of "goons" everywhere.

"That's what our fans are called," Jocz says proudly. "The album is 33 minutes long, a couple of minutes longer than the first. That might be a bit tough for some goons to cope with, but I guess they can go fuck themselves, huh?"

Lord knows what the goons would make of Sum 41 right now. Tonight, Whibley, 22, Baksh, 22, Jocz, 21, and bassist Jay McCaslin, 22, enjoy a punk hiatus. They've decided they want to be DJs.

"This album might be a bit tough for some 'goons' to cope with."



Little-known fact: Despite their youthful looks, Sum 41 actually formed during the Great Depression.

Their A&R man, Rob Stevenson, runs a club called Blue Collar Thursday at Lolita, a bar on New York's Lower East Side. It's a night dedicated to America's workingman anthems. Bruce Springsteen, John Mellencamp and anyone else who ever wore a checkered shirt and wiped axle grease from his brow will feature high on the playlist. At least that was the plan.

At Lolita, Sum 41 divide into their constituent parts. Baksh and McCaslin hog the decks, initially abiding by the club's musical agenda with Springsteen, Bob Seger, some Ted Nugent. But they cannot help themselves: Slowly but surely, the sound gets heavier and dirtier, until eventually drinkers who have been punching the air to Mellencamp find they don't know the words, much less recognize the growling, that accompany Iron Maiden's "Number of the Beast."

Meanwhile, Jocz and Whibley apply themselves to an experiment to see how Jack Daniel's and 7-Up affect human behavior. Whibley is so slight and urchin-like, you expect to see his mother waiting for him outside the bar, holding his bike. When the bartender challenges him on his age, he offers an ID that depicts a young Elvis Presley.

He's shy but affable as the first drink goes down. He says he likes the new Coldplay album. He's honored that Sum 41 are famous enough that Oasis have declared they hate them.

In a couple of hours, though, Whibley has changed, the way Dr. Jekyll might have after draining a steaming concoction from a test tube. He smashes his glass on the floor, and after some of the fancy back-and-forth footwork that often prefaces breakdancing, gravity takes over — and he falls to the floor.

"He has the constitution of a puppy dog, but we love him," sighs Jocz, who frog-marches Whibley outside and into a cab, where he curls up into the fetal position by the door.

We're driving through pouring rain when he decides he needs to open the window to throw up. Instead, he takes a face full of water kicked up by a passing truck. He looks around, soaked and wearing the pale, crushed look of Stan Laurel. McCaslin is doubled up laughing, and all hell breaks loose.

At first it looks as though Whibley is having some kind of seizure — his body, seemingly suspended above our heads, jerks wildly. But no — he has merely gone nuts, and is trying to →



punch and spit in McCaslin's face to punish him for laughing.

In the melee, Whibley kicks the taxi door wide open, much to the dismay of three lanes of New York traffic. Amid the horns and screeches of cars trying to get out of the way, his bandmates vigorously attempt to keep Whibley from falling out.

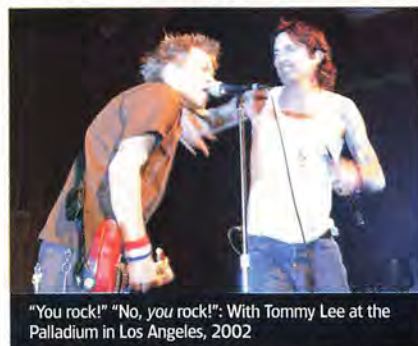
Finally the cabbie pulls over and gets out. McCaslin points out that there's a good chance Whibley is about to have the crap beaten out of him.

"Your friend gotta problem?" the cabbie demands, reasonably, as he helps stuff him back in the car.

Blender has heard that Lyor Cohen, the head of Island Def Jam Records, Sum 41's label, reportedly encourages the band's misbehavior, promising to pay for any damage as long as it's caught on tape and can be used as filler in Sum 41's DVDs. If that's true, he'll be upset that they don't have their cameras tonight. We head back to our hotel in tense silence, Whibley's cheeks bulging as the vomit brims in his throat.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

EVIDENCE SUGGESTS Whibley was more mature and focused when he was 11. He embarked on his musical odyssey 11 years ago by starting a rap group called Powerful Young Hustlers in his hometown of Ajax, Ontario, a Toronto suburb.



But Ajax was simply too staid to provide material for hardcore hip-hop, so Whibley formed a rock band, Casper, at Exeter High School. There he met Jocz and recruited fellow students McCaslin, who was playing bass with a band called Wizard, and Baksh, who was committed to metal via a Rage Against the Machine cover band called 747.

"I was about ready to leave the house for my first rehearsal with Casper, and I thought, 'These guys suck — I don't want to be in their band.' So I didn't go," Baksh recalls.

"I was angry, but I was also having fun. Being a brat is a liberating experience."

★

Eventually he did, though — and once assembled, Casper became Sum 41. By 1999, they had recorded a live set, *Half Hour of Power*. They made an accompanying home video of themselves perpetrating drive-by shootings around Ajax with Super Soaker water guns. Island signed them after an A&R man's wife played their demo tape during a gym workout. Generation *Jackass* had finally found its house band.

But Sum 41's moment really arrived in 2001 with the single "Fat Lip," which delivered something the dour modern-rock scene was lacking: a sense of humor.

"'Fat Lip' is about what a lot of kids go through, but we didn't want to sound like we always want to pound on someone, like Limp Bizkit do," Whibley explains. "I was an angry kid, but I was also having fun. Being a brat is a liberating experience."

Despite their appearance on various magazine best-of polls last year, Sum 41 do not see themselves as having ascended into the rock aristocracy. Ask them about their new friends DMX and Tommy Lee, and they evince not bravado or swagger, but baffled amusement.

"Meeting DMX made me realize Powerful Young Hustlers could never have worked," Whibley says, laughing. "You don't often meet a guy with a whole different energy and charisma."

"Not charisma necessarily," Jocz muses. "Just someone who could snap you in half like a stick."

Of course, they appreciate what they've accomplished. The success of "Fat Lip" was "awesome," they agree, but could truly be appreciated only once converted into the proper currency: the attention of "hot chicks."

"You know you've made it when girls so hot you'd normally be too nervous to look at start coming on to you," Jocz offers. "That, and having Tommy Lee get up onstage at one of your shows. You never get used to that. I'm pounding the drums wondering how big his dick really is, just like anyone else would be."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

TO BLENDER'S EARS, *Does This Look Infected?* sounds darker than Sum 41's debut, and more po-faced.

"I guess we've matured," Whibley suggests.

Well, maybe not. Blender suggests a hotel bar for our lunchtime interview. Jocz and Whibley prefer Flashdancers, an "upscale gentleman's club" located in a basement in Times Square.

Whibley has been awake for 90 minutes, and looks in need of a blood transfusion. Even so, "I'll take a JD and 7" are →

bloomingdale's

the right formula

Sean John

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his first words when a waitress's tray and cleavage loom over our table.

"You read all this shit about Mötley Crüe, and it does have an effect," he marvels. "Sometimes when I'm feeling like shit, I tell myself, 'More, you pussy! Get it while you can!'"

"Actually, I'm proud of how I behaved last night," Whibley adds. "I restrained myself. I even remembered that I had left my bag in the club, and I ended up getting it back. That's new for me — I'm taking care of business."

And so, as beautiful young women bank cash in their panties all around us, we discuss the new album. The story of misanthropic "Mr. Amsterdam," the angst of "Hell Song," the supercharged self-diagnosis of "All Messed Up" and the self-explanatory "Over My Head Better Off Dead" and "Thanks for Nothing" suggest Sum 41 are not all about frat-house short-sheeting and punky bird-flipping.

And yet Whibley rejects any notions that Sum 41 are serious, that they're punk. He seems positively affronted when asked if any of his lyrical concerns have a basis in real life.

"We're just a rock & roll band," he says. "We're not punks. We don't stand for anything apart from . . ."

"Being brats," Jocz offers.

"I have to listen to friends' stories to find out what's really going on in the world," Whibley declares.

There is more to Sum 41 than this, whatever their denials. Whibley's new song "Hooch," for example, is something of a departure. It begins as another high-speed assault and boasts a wry '80s-metal solo, but finishes with a slow, melancholic passage that sounds almost sensitive: "Fall into you/I don't believe



The *Brady Bunch* reunion movie was not going as planned.

this is real," he croons, sounding as though his flinty punk heart has been breached by love.

"I don't have a girl right now," he says, returning the smile of a jaw-droppingly hot Hispanic babe passing by. "I have a slam piece in Toronto, but no one regular."

A "slam piece"?

"That's a girl who's a good friend, and you don't date — but you hang out together and decide to fuck because you're bored."

He will grow up eventually, he predicts. Calling home to his mother is becoming more onerous, explanations for his transglobal bad behavior harder to come up with. Whibley would like the wisdom of the steady, levelheaded Baksh, and maybe a steady, loving relationship like McCaslin's. But not yet. Not while he's the 22-year-old frontman of a successful rock & roll band. And certainly not while big-boobed Andrea is sashaying toward us in cash-stuffed panties, asking to touch his hair. [BLENDER]



The Strokes' "Last Nite"

New Rock Feud!

Sum 41 mock the Strokes . . . and the Hives and the Vines in their hipster-taunting new video. Fight! Fight! Fight!



>> "THE STROKES don't get me going," says Steve Jocz, explaining Sum 41's decision to lampoon trendy "The" bands in their "Still Waiting" video. As the clip begins, a label boss urges the boys to take up smoking and change their name to "The Sums."



>> Mid-video, Sum 41 have been rechristened, and Deryck Whibley now goes by "Sven." They also wear a "The" band uniform of matching checked shirts and ties. "The Strokes look good," Dave Baksh allows. "But none of those bands rock!"



>> "Last Nite"-style subliminal flashes and collapsing stage gear complete the Strokes pastiche. Ironically, the Strokes aren't even atop Sum 41's "The" band shit list. "The Vines are totally the overrated runt of that pack," Jocz growls. *Miaow!*



Top dolla' with the gold flea colla'
Dippin' in my blue Impala
-Snoop Dogg



WE'LL BE THERE



Toni Braxton models
the controversial
new LAPD uniform.

JACKET BY FEVER JEANS.
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Indestructible!

Bankruptcy. Physical abuse. Rumors of an exploding boob. **Toni Braxton** has overcome them all to make the best album of her career. "The mistakes," the R&B diva says, "are behind me now!"

BY NICK DUERDEN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SHERYL NIELDS



BY THE TIME 3 o'clock in the afternoon arrives, it has become quite clear that the term *morning sickness* is something of a misnomer.

Toni Braxton, a soul diva of some repute and one of music's finest voices, is seated at a corner booth in Houston's, her favorite Los Angeles restaurant. She orders nachos and dip, recommends the barbecued ribs to *Blender* and readies herself for a simple cheeseburger. And then this happens: Her eyes grow wide with panic, her hand rushes to her mouth, she makes a sound comprising only consonants ("Ngghh") and, as her cheeks fill with bile, she rushes from the table to the nearest restroom.

"I am so sorry about that," she says upon her return 15 minutes later. "I'm halfway through my first trimester. My doctor recommended bed rest, but I haven't had time for that. Right now, I'm sick all day. It's horrible."

Braxton, 34, who in 2001 married former Mint Condition member Keri Lewis, is pregnant with their second child. It's her second pregnancy in as many years; nausea has become a permanent part of her life. The baby will arrive a few months after the release of her fifth album, *More Than a Woman*, and just eight weeks before she takes a leading role in *Aida* on Broadway. After a rather difficult time of late — the lingering fallout of an abusive relationship, bankruptcy and an alleged silicone explosion in the chest area at 35,000 feet — she is back doing what she does best: singing.

"It's what I do," she says.

When Braxton finally got around to recording *More Than a Woman* this past February, she had a lot to put behind her. In a career that began a decade ago — 10 years in which the Maryland-born R&B queen set the standard for peerless love songs with such ballads as "Unbreak My Heart" and the lustrous "Breathe Again" — she has sold an estimated 19 million records. And yet, in 1998, she somehow found herself bankrupt.

"I made a whole lot of money for someone, but I sure as hell never got it," she says, frowning. "My royalty



statements were always tiny." She gives an example: After she sold 8 million copies of *Toni Braxton*, a check finally arrived. She was pretty excited. "Guess how much I got?" she asks. "Two thousand dollars!" She doesn't appear to be kidding. "I'm not! Two thousand dollars!"

Braxton also, it must be said, enjoyed a certain standard of living, and was fond of the finer things in life: Tiffany's jewelry, BMWs, exquisite bed linen. . . .

"I like what everyone else likes — nice clothes, nice houses," she says. "At the time of the bankruptcy, I was living in a condo in L.A. that I'd gotten for under half a million. I would hardly call that extravagant. Would you?"

Regardless, the press had a field day: R&B diva lives large and loses everything. As her credit cards were confiscated, fans sent her money, which warmed her heart but made her more embarrassed still. She closed the door on the outside world and suffered repeated panic attacks.

"The day I was declared bankrupt I finally woke up to life and put a lot behind me," she says. Her cheeseburger arrives, and a look of caution descends on her features. "I hope I keep this down."

More Than a Woman is Braxton's best album to date. She spent two years in an

abusive relationship with a former boyfriend ("He liked to push me into things — doors, walls, you name it"), but she has grown up and grown assertive, and her music shows it. While she continues to excel as a balladeer, she has also urbanized her music with the help of producers Rodney Jerkins and the Neptunes. "Hit the Freeway," for example, is feisty, up-front and

vigorously sexy.

"Somebody recently compared me to J.Lo," she says, frowning again. "I have a lot of time for her as an actress, but please, give me some credit. I know just how good a singer I am. I've been around long enough to have my own identity."

Braxton's record company, Arista, clearly has faith in her, re-signing her in 2001 for a reported \$20 million.

"Oh, it was much more than that," she says, smiling. "I won't be going bankrupt again."

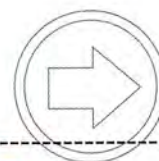
Her L.A. mansion amply proves this point. Set high up within a newly built gated community, it is *Gone With the Wind* opulent, complete with winding staircases, crystal chandeliers and garage space for a BMW and a Porsche (but not a \$125,000 Hummer, which sits titanically outside on full display). Reclining on a vast sofa in the front room, she looks very much the lady of the manor.

"I've finally reached my full potential in life," she says, beaming. "The mistakes are all behind me now."

What about the exploding-breasts rumor?

"All lies! Nothing exploded, and anyway, it was saline, not silicone. I just had tingling in my left side, which turned out to be scar tissue, so my doctor took them out. I'd always wanted big boobies, see, but after I had my first child, I got them naturally. These," she says, grabbing her braless pair beneath a sheer vest, "are completely natural, all mine. Pretty lucky, huh?" [BLENDER]

"All lies! Nothing exploded, and anyway, it was saline, not silicone!"



THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

CARLOS SANTANA

Only one man in history has learned how to play guitar in a strip club, rocked half a million fans while out of his gourd on acid and received career advice from angels. That man's name is Carlos Santana

BY CLARK COLLIS



Carlos at 14: "Note to self: Grow mustache."

1 CARLOS SANTANA'S FIRST STAGE COSTUME WAS A COWBOY OUTFIT.

In 1957, a 10-year-old Carlos was playing the violin on the streets of Tijuana dressed in Western duds. "We did all the stereotypical Mexican shit," he says. "It was very trying, but I don't regret it."

2 HE LEARNED TO PLAY THE GUITAR IN A STRIP CLUB.

"On Sundays I would play 'Ave Maria' in church on the violin," he recalls. "And the rest of the week I'd play guitar in this joint where prostitutes danced. There's a university of life in the streets. If you don't get that, academia's not going to do you any good. You're just going to sound like an intelligent fool."

3 HE CAN USE HIS GUITAR TO MAKE WOMEN REMOVE THEIR CLOTHES!

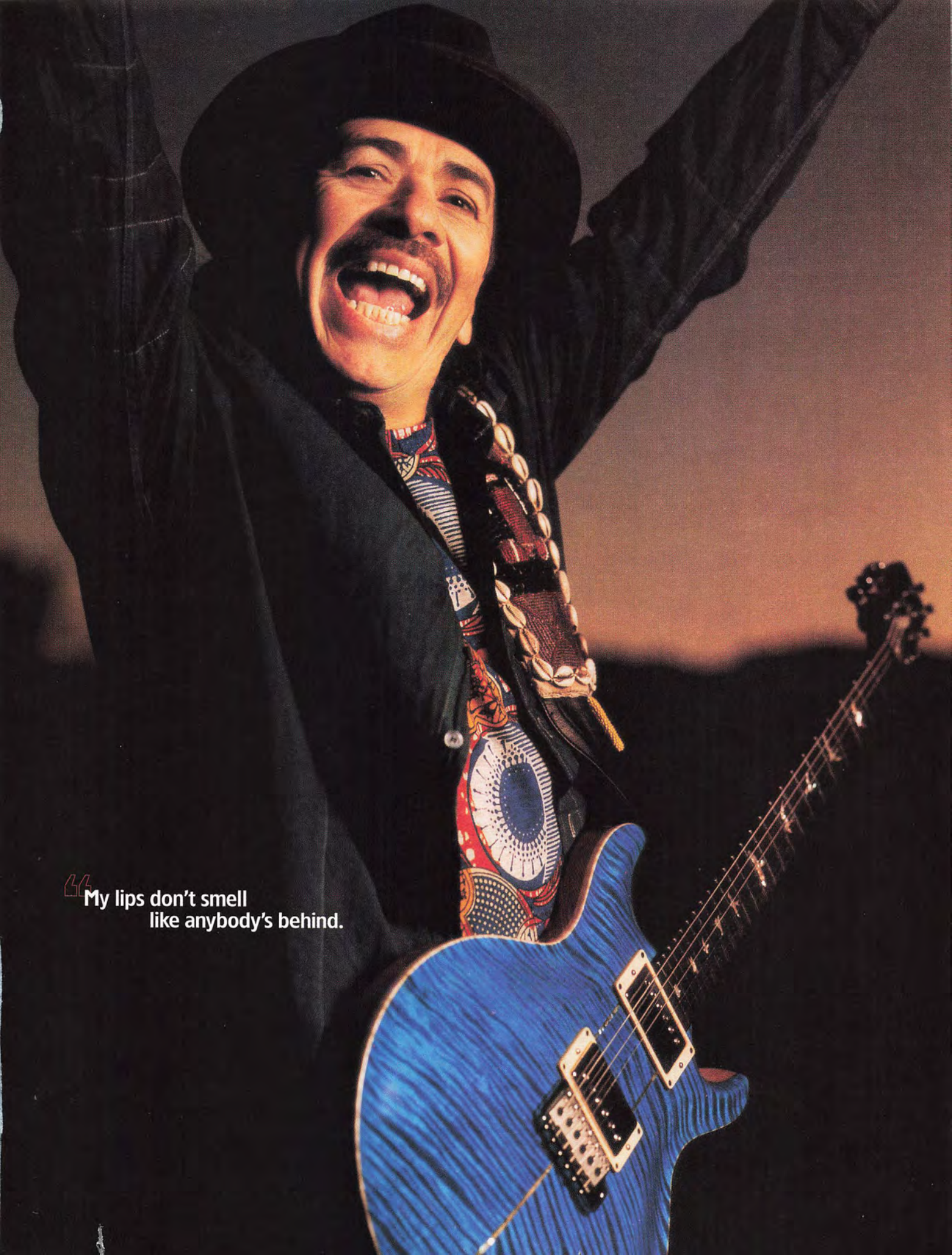
It's a trick he learned from the older musicians at the strip club. "They would say, 'Watch, we're going to make her take her clothes off,'" he says. "They'd play this strip music, and pretty soon she would."

4 AT FIRST, HE THOUGHT SAN FRANCISCO WAS REALLY SQUARE.

In the early '60s, Santana's family moved to the soon-to-be hippie capital. "I'd been listening to John Lee Hooker, B.B. King, Ray Charles. Then I came to San Francisco about two years before the hippie thing, and it's the Beach Boys and Jan and Dean and that sort of thing. I was like, 'Whoa, I want to go back to Tijuana!'"

5 SANTANA'S MUSIC "MADE GIRLS' NIPPLES HARD."

"After the hippie thing exploded, you could hear Ravi Shankar, Jimi Hendrix, Otis Redding — all in San Francisco," he says. Inspired, the guitarist set about putting together his own band that would combine blues with Afro-Cuban rhythms. "All of a sudden, women moved differently," he says. "You know, they weren't catching butterflies anymore; their hands were accentuating the contour of their sensual body parts. It's sacred, sensual music. How else are you going to multiply?" →



“My lips don’t smell
like anybody’s behind.”

6 HE DEVELOPED "A SORT OF THING" FOR ACID, Mescaline AND MUSHROOMS.

"Even Cary Grant did acid, because he made so many movies he didn't know who the hell he was. With the right people and in the right place, it can be an enormous, beatific, birthing experience."

7 BUT HE DOESN'T LIKE HEROIN OR COCAINE.

Not least because of the effect the drugs had on certain members of the original Santana lineup. "We didn't practice," he says. "Everybody got seriously swollen egos. I mean, I like to get high, but not stupid."

8 HE WAS, HOWEVER, COMPLETELY BLOTTO DURING HIS SET AT WOODSTOCK.

Under the impression that there was plenty of time for the drug to wear off before he went onstage, Santana dropped a tab of acid. Unfortunately, just as the drug was taking effect, the band was told it had to go on immediately. "There were 550,000 people," he says. "It was pretty scary, especially when the neck of your guitar is dancing like a snake."

9 HE DIDN'T KNOW THAT "BLACK MAGIC WOMAN" WAS GOING TO BE A HIT.

"No, we had no idea," he says of the song, which would reach number 4 in 1971. "But we knew it had something that was really different. All of a sudden, when Santana came out, Chicago starting having congas, the Rolling Stones had congas. We looked around and everybody had congas; we thought, 'OK, this is working.'"

10 HE ALMOST BECAME JIMI HENDRIX'S BOSS.

"The last time I saw Jimi, this lady who was with him said, 'You know,



4 An orgasm has no guilt or shame.

Jimi was kind of talking about joining your band.' But I think what he had in mind was possibly to take my band away from me!"

11 THE BAND SANTANA ONCE PLAYED A SHOW WITHOUT ITS NAMESAKE.

"Basically, I gave an ultimatum to some of the members of the band. I said, 'I want the manager and this other guy in the band to go. If they go, I'll stay in the band; if they don't go, I'll leave.' They said, 'Well, you know, it's only your band because of the name.' But they called me up after three or four days and said, 'We hate to say this, but people are screaming that they want you!'"

12 LEGEND HAS IT THAT SANTANA SINGER GREGG ROLIE ONCE TRIED TO KILL HIM.

According to one biography of the guitarist, the relationship between



Sri Chinmoy prays for toupees, 1979



"Look into my eyes. You are feeling sleeeeeepy..."



The '60s were a lean time for shirt makers.

Santana and the vocalist got so bad that Rolie tried to drown him in a swimming pool during a trip to Puerto Rico. Santana remembers things differently: "We were just kidding! They said, 'Why don't you jump in?' I said, 'Well, I don't know how to swim.' So they just pushed me in. They said, 'You learn how to swim like this!'"

14 IN THEIR EARLY DAYS, SANTANA ATTRACTED A BAD ELEMENT...

Santana recalls going down to his hotel lobby after one show and finding it full of "pimps, dealers and weirdos. Certain people in the band attracted those kinds of people. You know, basically, lowlife losers. Those kinds of people drain my energy."

15 ... AND THEIR FAIR SHARE OF GROUPIES.

The most notable of these was the "Burger Queen," who entertained the group several times — and once serviced the entire band. "An orgasm has no guilt or shame," Santana says today. "It's like Niagara Falls. It's pure energy."

16 CARLOS ONCE HAD A GURU.

In the early '70s, he began to follow the teachings of spiritual leader Sri Chinmoy, who demanded that he cut his hair, become a vegetarian and give up drugs. "Those weren't hard," he says. "I have a lot of won't power. Like I-won't-smoke-cigarettes-anymore power." →



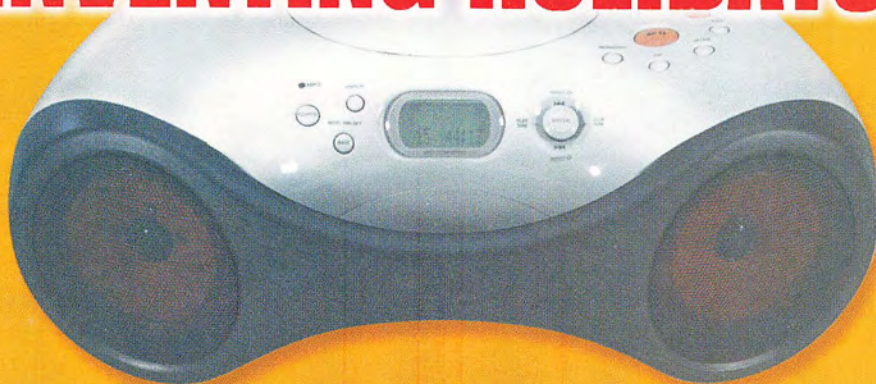
Journey, sucking in the '70s, from left: Neil Schon, Steve Smith, Steve Perry, Ross Valory, Gregg Rolie

13 YOU CAN BLAME SANTANA FOR JOURNEY.

Journey founding members Gregg Rolie and Neil Schon met while playing in Santana. "Was it a surprise when they became so huge? No. Bill Graham [Santana's former manager] told me, 'Journey's going to be really big.' He had a huge finger on the pulse."



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Santana in 1970, from left: Carlos Santana, José Chepito Areas, Michael Carabello, David Brown, Gregg Rolie, Mike Shrieve

17 HE DOESN'T HAVE A GURU ANYMORE.

"It wasn't an easy split. He was putting pressure on us, saying 'If you leave me, you'll drown in a sea of darkness.' I said, 'That sounds like those pimps who say to the young ladies at the Greyhound station, "This world is a jungle and I'll protect you, but you've got to work for me." I learned a lot from him, but everything that was honey turned into vinegar.'"

18 MILES DAVIS ONCE SAID OF SANTANA, "THAT MOTHERFUCKER CAN PLAY HIS ASS OFF!"

"That was a big compliment," Santana says when he's reminded what the famously temperamental trumpeter said. "He was only hard to get along with if you had no business being around him. But he was very courteous with me."

19 HIS MODEST ALBUM SALES IN THE '80s AND '90s DIDN'T BOTHER HIM.

"I just never think like that at all," he says. "Why should I think about sales or Grammys? What more validation do you need than your phone rings and it's Miles Davis?"

20 IN JUNE 1991, HE WAS ARRESTED FOR POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA.

"My criminal record was blank," he says. "They're holding me because I forgot to dump my bag coming from Mexico, and there was a joint the size of a toothpick. That was a threat to the national security?"

21 BUT IT WAS THE POLICE WHO ENDED UP IN TEARS.

"The guy who was taking me to jail starts to cry. I go, 'Man, what's the matter?' He goes, 'This is the worst day of my life.' All the police were like, 'This is a mistake!'"



Mr. and Mrs. Santana: Get a room!



Invisible doubles partner Metatron not pictured

22 "THEY" STILL SET TRAPS FOR HIM.

"I say things in interviews that are not anti-government but not pro-government, either. My agenda doesn't fit politics or religion. We should have free water and free electricity for all people. Just like the air and the sun. So they set traps for me at the airport. They want me out of the way."



Miles Davis blows (in a good way!).

23 IF YOU "DON'T DO WINDOWS," DON'T BOTHER AUDITIONING FOR HIS BAND.

This has nothing to do with Microsoft. "If you say, 'I don't do windows,' that's really old — the whole world is nothing but windows. That means you're lazy."

24 HE USED TO GET VERY MOODY.

And depressed. And angry. Finally, in 1995, he entered therapy, and recalled that as a child in Tijuana, he had been repeatedly molested by a visiting American. He now says he uses the experience as "creative fuel!"

25 HE HAS BEEN MARRIED FOR ALMOST 30 YEARS.

"I was blessed to find a person who's beautiful to look at but is 100,000 times more beautiful inwardly," he says of his wife, Deborah. "And she understands accounting!"

26 CARLOS REGULARLY TALKS TO ANGELS.

"We need to call on the invisible ones collectively," he says. "The Arturians, Syrians, archangels and angels. They are like electricity. All we have to do is call on them and say, 'I give you permission to rewire my body while I sleep, that I am able to receive more light and give

out more compassion and understanding.' That's the way we're going to change this planet. Not dropping bombs and ego-tripping."

28 PROBLEMS WITH PRESIDENTS 1.

Santana twice turned down invitations from President Clinton to play at the White House, because the Latin American officials who would also be present came from countries with bad civil-rights records. "My lips," he says, "don't smell like anybody's behind."

29 PROBLEMS WITH PRESIDENTS 2.

And don't get him started on George W. Bush. "My question to George Bush and Saddam Hussein is, go look at the movie 2001: A Space Odyssey, and when you see the gorillas fighting over some mud in the beginning, tell me: How far have we come?"

30 THE RUNAWAY SUCCESS OF HIS 1999 ALBUM, SUPERNATURAL, WAS A BIT OF A SURPRISE.

"It wasn't even a surprise; it was a shock," he says of the multi-Grammy Award-winning CD, which included contributions from Dave Matthews, Rob Thomas and Lauryn Hill. "I said, 'I won't apologize if it sells one or two platinum.' But it's now 25 million worldwide. I always dreamed of opening a door that everybody can walk into together. And that was a big door."

31 AND ON LEAD VOCALS ... PLACIDO DOMINGO!

Santana's new album, *Shaman*, also features an abundance of guests, including Michelle Branch, P.O.D. and legendary tenor Domingo. "Placido's a very young person," Santana says, "like B.B. King or Miles."

32 HE HAS NO IDEA HOW MANY MUSICIANS HAVE PLAYED IN SANTANA OVER THE YEARS.

"I don't keep track of that. I don't know how many albums I've played on, how many songs I've recorded. Miles Davis used to say, 'The key to staying young is to have a bad memory.' And I'm really young!"

33 GAME, SET AND MATCH, CARLOS SANTANA!

"I love tennis," he says. "I admire excellence. When you see Pete Sampras or Andre Agassi, it's just like watching Jimi Hendrix. I know John McEnroe. He plays guitar. He gave me tips. On tennis, not playing the guitar." [BLENDER]

27

METATRON: ANGEL WITH A ROLODEX.

Although he knows it sounds like "California New Age stuff," Santana claims he has been in contact with an angel named Metatron since the late '80s. Metatron, he says, helped him "get back in the ring" musically, prompting him to "hook up with a lot of new people."



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"We're Really Happy Where We Are"

And not only is Eddie Vedder happy, the long-silent **Pearl Jam** frontman is talking, too: about becoming grunge's great survivors, why they'll never be as good as Nirvana and all those "fuckers" who have ripped them off

BY NEIL STRAUSS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DANNY CLINCH



"ONE THING ABOUT being the underdog again," Pearl Jam's Eddie Vedder is saying, "is that people are less likely to tear you down."

It's a crisp Seattle day in October 2002, and Pearl Jam, as Vedder happily acknowledges, are no longer "All the Rage," as the cover of *Time* magazine screamed in 1993. Their record sales peaked long ago; their fame, intolerable to Vedder at its grunge-crazed zenith, has waned. There was a time, not too many years ago, when Pearl Jam were the hottest property in rock. And not just because they were the most popular rock band of the moment — outselling contemporaries Nirvana by millions — but also because Vedder refused to play the game. This meant no interviews, no videos, no television appearances, no Ticketmaster, no Calvin Klein ads.

Today, huddled with *Blender* inside the longtime Pearl Jam practice space just outside downtown Seattle, the band —

frontman Vedder, guitarists Mike McCready and Stone Gossard, bassist Jeff Ament and drummer Matt Cameron — sits patiently among ceiling-high boxes of leftover tour passes, microphones and crew headsets as journalists from around the world wait their turn. The musicians who formerly spurned all mainstream media have set aside one week to promote their new record, *Riot Act*.

Yes, Pearl Jam are acting more like a normal rock band. But as usual, they are doing it their way. At the end of *Blender*'s first interview, Vedder will ask us to pose for a Polaroid photograph with him.

This, however, is not flattery: It is paranoia. "There was one guy from Germany who, two years ago, wrote some stuff that was absolutely fabricated," Vedder explains. "I mean, it would have never come out of my mouth, and that was interesting."

He pauses. "So I always wanted to remember what he looked like, in case I ever saw him again."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

SOME WOULD ARGUE that these are the comments of a thin-skinned man. Vedder probably wouldn't argue back. He has always taken things more personally than your average rock star. Ask him about Pearl Jam's remarkable run in the early '90s, for instance, when their first two albums, *Ten* and *Vs.*, sold a combined 18 million records, and all he can do is wince and recall "Bon Jovi making fun of where we were coming from in a video" and gossip columnist "Liz Smith wearing grungewear."

And yet, while so many of their contemporaries — Nirvana, Soundgarden, Alice in Chains and, →



Eddie Vedder: "The goddamned maid forgot to dust in the corners again."





Eddie's farting never failed to
crack up the rest of Pearl Jam.
From left: Stone Gossard,
Matt Cameron, Jeff Ament,
Mike McCready, Eddie Vedder.



This Pearl Jam rehearsal was brought to you by World o' Carpets.

beyond Seattle, Smashing Pumpkins — are but memories of a bygone era, Pearl Jam are still around, going strong with eight albums under their belt (or 80, if you count the 72 live CDs they released in 2000 and 2001).

"I think we've made some pretty good decisions," says Vedder of the band's scaled-down commercial ambitions. Pearl Jam have had the same independent Seattle manager, the same independent Seattle publicist and pretty much the same road crew for years. Their contract with Sony Music expires in six months, and they're exploring their options, including signing with an independent label. Vedder marvels at his friends in U2, who spent the better part of two years promoting their CD *All That You Can't Leave Behind*. "I can't imagine doing that," he says. "We fought against that, and we're really happy with where we are."

Fought against what?

"Against being the highest-profile band in America," he responds, picking up a cigarette pack off the table. "For one thing, you have to work hard to stay there. And at some point it's going to wane, and you're going to have to deal with that. So we kind of weaned ourselves off the, uh, voluptuous breast of stardom."

The weaning began in 1993, when Vedder declined to make any videos to support *Vs.*, Pearl Jam's 1993 follow-up to its 11 million-selling debut, *Ten*. While the record still sold around 7 million copies, a fan backlash had begun. In 1994, the band fought a very public battle



It's raining Vedders: Stage-diving in Seattle, 1991

with concert conglomerate Ticketmaster over pricing (even testifying before Congress on Capitol Hill) and chose to cancel their summer tour. That year, when Pearl Jam released *Vitalogy*, sales dropped to 5 million. By 1996, grunge was over, Ticketmaster was more powerful than ever and Pearl Jam's fourth album, *No Code*, couldn't even crack 1.5 million in sales.

Since no one was allowed to talk to the band at the time, no one really knew about the dissension in the ranks when Vedder decided to pull his J.D. Salinger routine: The other guys in the group,

having come so close to the rock & roll dream in other Seattle bands such as Mother Love Bone and Green River, were confused. Why had they been striving for rock's golden ring all these years if they weren't allowed to grab it?

"We all had been in bands for so many years," says guitarist Gossard. "We couldn't even conceptualize the idea of pulling back. When Eddie said, 'Let's try and pull back,' it was hard for everyone."

The irony is that, having "pulled back" from rock's cut-and-thrust with seeming success, the band now finds itself accidentally engaged in a high-profile showdown with its old rival Nirvana, whose long-awaited greatest-hits package is due to hit stores on November 12 — the same day as *Riot Act*. *Blender* breaks the news to Vedder.

"No kidding," he says. "It's funny, because me and Krist [Novoselic, Nirvana's former bassist] said we had heard about this thing with the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, where they kind of agreed to release records six months apart. And Krist goes, 'We should think about that.' So who knew?"

He pauses. "Well, I'll tell you what," he says, "no matter how good our new record is, their greatest-hits record is going to be better."

Well, that's because it's their greatest hits. If Pearl Jam were releasing a best-of package, too —

"No," he interrupts. "Theirs would be better, too. It's tough to be better than Nirvana's greatest hits."

It is not easy to get Eddie Vedder, who is by nature empathic, to say anything bad about anyone. He sympathizes with Michael Jackson (and did not enjoy the way MTV made fun of him during this year's Video Music Awards), and he even sympathizes with the obsessed fan who stalked him for years. "As much as it has created insanity in my life, I still don't want to say anything about that person; I kind of understand it may just boil down to their chemical makeup."

There are exceptions, however. He does not enjoy hearing Pearl Jam

imitators such as Nickelback or

Creed on the radio. Pearl Jam's music, he believes, just doesn't lend itself to "karaoke." Despite Pearl Jam's turtle-ish attitude toward fame, he says,

fans have still grown tired of their churning guitars and his

soulful growl. "They got sick of us," he says with a shrug, "but probably from hearing other bands that sound like us."

He laughs. "Fuckers!" he exclaims, raising a fist into the air, shaking it →

"We weaned ourselves off the voluptuous breast of stardom."

NIRVANA

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righteously and cursing the indignity of it all. "Goddamn it!"

★★★★★

THERE IS A newfound sense of fragility and mortality in evidence on *Riot Act*. It was recorded at Seattle's Studio X this past spring, with no more than three or four takes of each song, and bassist Ament says the album was "the easiest record we've ever made."

"With the first record, we had just met, and there was all this excitement and energy. We were on the honeymoon," he says, "but we weren't as good as musicians. There have been some records in the past where we were better musicians but we didn't all feel good about being there. This record we were all there. Together."

On "Love Boat Captain," Vedder addresses the topic of Roskilde, the 2000 outdoor festival in Denmark at which nine people were trampled to death during Pearl Jam's set, singing, "Lost nine friends we'll never know/Two years ago today/And if our lives became too long/Would it add to our regret?"

"Denmark changed all of us," Vedder says, exhaling smoke. Before going onstage at the festival that day, the band learned that their longtime friend Chris Cornell (Soundgarden's former lead singer) and his wife and manager, Susan



"Come on, guys, a joke's a joke. . . .": Pearl Jam in 1992

Silver, had just had a baby girl. In addition, Pearl Jam's longtime sound engineer was also expecting a child.

"It was the absolute extreme end of the life cycle, being played out right in front of you and inside you," he says. "If you live long enough, you are going to see this stuff. You are going to see 9/11, and hopefully never see it again."

If Vedder has learned one thing these past few years, *Riot Act* seems to say, it is this: Life is full of hardship and sorrow, much of it without meaning, but there is a bright side. To quote Vedder quoting the Beatles in "Love Boat Captain," "All you need is love."

"There is a line that someone wrote to me in a letter: 'There is an art to live with pain,'" Vedder says. "That could be the through-line of the record."

It is also the art of Pearl Jam, though much of that pain, from their battle against marketing to their war against Ticketmaster, has been self-inflicted. Nowadays, they've been around long enough to have less anxiety about what people think, simply because fewer people think of them. Perhaps, after years of learning from such friends and role models as Neil Young, Pete Townshend and Bono, they have finally found the right balance between life, career and creativity.

Vedder recalls a day he recently spent painting with an older friend of his, who knew nothing about the band. "I remember explaining what it was like to make the first record, and we were really hoping to sell 40,000 copies, which for some reason was the number you had to reach in order for the label to support you making another one," he recalls. "So he asked how many copies that record ended up selling, and I couldn't stop laughing. I told him, and we toasted."

"Later I told him that I thought we'd made some pretty good decisions about protecting the future of the band and keeping things at a manageable level," Vedder says, lowering his eyes, for the first time, to meet *Blender's*. "In 10 minutes, I had explained the timeline of the band to my friend. And that was the first time I had ever said it out loud: We scaled back and we did it." [BLENDER]

Pre-nirvana
Nirvana, from left:
Chad Channing,
Krist Novoselic,
Kurt Cobain,
Jason Everman



THE GRUNGE PETE BEST! CHAD CHANNING

CLAIM TO FAME Played drums with Nirvana from their first single, 1988's "Love Buzz," through their 1989 debut, *Bleach*, before making way first for Mudhoney's Dan Peters and then some guy named Dave Grohl.

WHERE IS HE NOW? Drums and sings with East of the Equator, a five-piece band that counts a father and his two sons as members. In his spare time, Channing collects martial-arts films and Time-Life books on the Old West.

Grunge: Where Are They Now?

In the early '90s, they put Seattle on the rock map. Ten years later, a surprising number are living as hermits! What became of the unsung heroes of grunge?

THE OTHER GRUNGE PETE BEST! JASON EVERMAN

CLAIM TO FAME Played guitar alongside Kurt Cobain with Nirvana in 1989 and is credited on *Bleach*, even though he didn't actually perform on the album.

WHERE IS HE NOW? After leaving Nirvana, he briefly joined Soundgarden, but his current whereabouts are a mystery. "The legend is that he joined the armed forces," says Mudhoney frontman Mark Arm. "I like to think he joined the navy to learn seamanship and discipline."

GRUNGE BROTHERS! VAN AND GARY LEE CONNER

CLAIM TO FAME Van (bass) and Gary Lee (guitar) Conner formed Screaming Trees in the mid-'80s with singer Mark Lanegan and became as famous for their drinking and brawling as for their music. While recording the Trees' final album, *Dust* (1996), the pair beat each other to the floor.



Screaming Trees
Big Van (left)
and Big Gary Lee

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? Van plays in a heavy-acid-rock group called VALIS (Vast Active Living Intelligence System). The San Angelo, Texas-based Gary Lee wakes daily at 3 A.M. to deliver newspapers, sporadically releases solo CDs and lives a "hermit lifestyle" with his wife and daughter.

GRUNGE MANIAC! BLAG DAHLIA

CLAIM TO FAME Singer for the Dwarves, a band that gained notoriety in 1990 with their Sub Pop Records debut, *Blood Guts & Pussy*, which featured a naked dwarf sodomizing a rabbit on the album cover and a song about statutory rape.

WHERE IS HE NOW? Still fronts the Dwarves but has also become an author — his first book, *Armed to the Teeth With Lipstick*, is "a hard-boiled tale of sex, death, dope and violence." John Grisham, you have been warned!

JENNIFER MAERZ



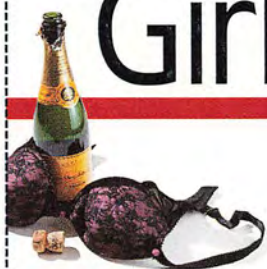
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Girl-Group Gomorrah!



Sugar and spice and all things nice: That's what girls are made of. Except those who form bands — they're often made of booze, drugs, lawsuits and deviant sexual practices. Hooray! *Blender* tips its hat to the most deranged girl groups of all time. . .

BY JOHN AIZLEWOOD



Though they never won, the Spice Girls' football games were always well-attended.



The Supremes' "ghetto Mary Poppins" look never caught on.

The Supremes

Where did their love go?

THE STORY The Destiny's Child of their day. Diana Ross, despite being neither the prettiest nor most talented Supreme, took over the group after she ousted Florence Ballard from the lead singer's role in 1962. (A rumored affair with her label boss, Supremes major-domo Berry Gordy, probably helped.)

In 1967, the Supremes became Diana Ross & the Supremes, and Ballard, who enjoyed a drink, was fired. Ross left to go solo in 1970, shoving the others out of the way at the group's final concert. A version of the Supremes reunited in 1983 to celebrate Motown's twenty-fifth anniversary; this

time, Ross shoved Mary Wilson and almost knocked her to the ground.

OUR EXPERTS SAY "Diana keeps getting more insane," says comic Kathy Griffin. "She hit someone in a French airport the other month, although I can understand that. I've been to a French airport. . . ."

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? Ballard, the group's best singer, stayed in Detroit, had an unsuccessful solo career and, on welfare and pills, died of a heart attack in 1976. Wilson moved to Los Angeles but was injured in a 1994 car accident that killed her teenage son. Ross became an international superstar; she entered rehab this year after she canceled a 10-date solo tour, allegedly due to poor ticket sales.

The Spice Girls

They wanted to "zigzag." They never did say why

THE STORY Five suburban drama-school Brits — Victoria "Posh" Beckham, Melanie "Scary" Brown, Emma "Baby" Bunton, Melanie "Sporty" Chisholm and Geri "Ginger" Halliwell — were assembled by father-and-son management duo Chris and Bob Herbert, who were soon replaced by Simon "American Idol" Fuller.

The Spice Girls supported Britain's right-wing Conservative party and invented something they called "girl power." Phil Spector called them the Antichrist.

After the group sold 33 million copies worldwide of its first two albums, the bulimic but charismatic Halliwell left amid bitterness and bitchiness in 1998. The Girls split following the release of their disastrous, ominously titled third album, *Forever*.

OUR EXPERTS SAY "Simon Fuller is a god," says Kim Fowley, who managed '70s girl band the Runaways.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Halliwell became a United Nations "goodwill ambassador." Chisholm's second album has been delayed until 2003. Bunton, Beckham and Brown have been dumped by their record labels.



Scary just *lived* to point!

TLC: Still adorable, even in the black, cold vacuum of outer space



TLC

Burning down the house

THE STORY Discovered by Boyz II Men guru Dallas Austin, TLC looked kooky back in 1992, when Lisa "Left Eye" Lopes replaced her glasses lens with a condom. Rozonda "Chilli" Thomas gave birth to Austin's son, but Lopes effectively ran the group.

In 1994, Lopes burned down the Atlanta mansion of her boyfriend, football star Andre Rison. She was

fined \$10,000, given five years' probation and ordered into rehab. Tionne "T-Boz" Watkins suffers from sickle cell anemia; in 1996, she released a solo single, "Play With Myself," about masturbation. In 1995 TLC filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, shortly before *CrazySexyCool* became the best-selling album ever by an all-female act.

OUR EXPERTS SAY "They were all so childlike, even with condoms over their eyes," Griffin says.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? Lopes died in a car accident in Honduras this year. The new TLC album, *3D*, which features Lopes's last work, was released on November 12.

TLC filed for bankruptcy protection in 1995.



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The Runaways:
So that's one
ice cream each,
then, ladies?

The Runaways

Hot leatherettes

THE STORY Leather-clad, loud and feathered of hair, the Runaways, among them a 15-year-old Joan Jett, were assembled by boss man Kim Fowley in Los Angeles in the mid-'70s. Cherie Currie wore stockings, suspenders and a bodice onstage — and a generation of girls decided this was better than watching Foghat.

After they were arrested in Britain in 1976 for stealing hotel keys and a hair dryer, the tabloid *News of the World* spoke darkly of young men masturbating while the Runaways played. Numerous Runaways came and went (including future Bangle Michael Steele, known then as Sue Thomas), and the music wilted. Fowley masterminded three albums until 1977, but the band soon disintegrated. Without the Runaways, there would have been no Vixen.

OUR EXPERTS SAY "The Runaways took the impact of the Beatles' music, mixed it with garage rock and gave it a slumber-party feel," Fowley says.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? Jett (a keen supporter of Sapphic causes) and Lita Ford enjoyed successful solo careers. Currie became a drug-treatment charity volunteer and a checkout clerk, and wrote an autobiography, *Neon Angel*. Jackie Fox became an attorney. Vicki Blue appeared in *This Is Spinal Tap*.



The
always-
demure
Cherie
Currie

A tabloid spoke darkly of men masturbating while the Runaways played.

OUR PANEL OF EXPERTS

KATHY GRIFFIN Flame-haired, sharp-tongued comic and voracious pop-culture junkie

KIM FOWLEY Prolific songwriter, producer and recording artist best known for assembling the '70s femme glam-rock band the Runaways



Another "au naturel" Shangri-Las publicity shot

The Shangri-Las

Leaders of the pack

THE STORY Under the aegis of Svengali George “Shadow” Morton, two sisters and a pair of identical twins from Queens, New York, became the first ‘60s girl group of note. The foursome specialized in such epic teen melodramas as “Leader of the Pack” (ruffian boyfriend dies in tragic motorcycle crash), “Give Us Your Blessings” (boy and girl die in a tragic car crash) and “I Can Never Go Home Anymore” (errant daughter causes mother to die).

They pretended to be a trio for most of their career, with at least one of the interchangeable Shangri-Las usually too "sick" to attend photo sessions and concerts. They chewed gum, smoked marijuana, swore like sailors and, Morton claimed, once kidnapped a man in Philadelphia. They split in 1969. In 1989, the surviving members sued a group of imitators who claimed they were the Shangri-Las.

OUR EXPERTS SAY "They were role models," Griffin says. "Middle-class girls who wore biker jackets, even though they really didn't know how to."

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? Mary Weiss fled west and briefly became a hippie before singing on Aerosmith's version of the Shangri-Las' "Remember (Walking in the Sand)." She now runs a furniture business in New York.

Betty Weiss went on to become a housewife, but she took part in a group reunion in 1989. Mary Ann Ganser died of encephalitis in 1970, and her twin sister, Marge, died in 1996 of breast cancer.

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GIRL-GROUP GOMORRAH!



The Shaggs: So that's where Hanson got their image from.

The Shaggs

Sisters doing it for . . . their dad

THE STORY The Shaggs — Dot, Betty and Helen Wiggins — were three frumpy, dirt-poor sisters from Fremont, New Hampshire, whose (shall we say) basic 1969 folk-rock album, *Philosophy of the World*, made them cult stars among bohemians.

They were forced to write and record by their mullah/father, Austin, although they could neither play nor sing. Austin educated the girls at home, forced them to do physical exercises every afternoon and, Helen claimed, abused her. When Helen married at age 28, she was too scared to tell her father. When Austin finally found out, he went after her husband with a shotgun. A heart attack killed Austin in 1975, and the Shaggs promptly disbanded.

OUR EXPERTS SAY "The Shaggs were mutants who by default made a great record," Fowley marvels.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? Dot is a house-cleaner, Helen is a manic-depressive who lives off disability benefits and Betty works in the storeroom of a kitchen warehouse. A movie about their lives is currently in the works.



The Go-Go's: Belinda Carlisle's headband would later have a successful solo career.

#1 Gonzo Girl Group!

The Go-Go's

They had the beat. And the drugs. And the home movies to prove it

THE STORY The Go-Go's were gum-snapping, pillow-fighting 1980s California pop-rock stars whose favorite offstage trick was photographing their pudenda and slipping the Polaroids under roadies' doors; the roadies then had to match genitalia to Go-Go.

Singer Belinda Carlisle controlled her compulsive overeating with a fierce cocaine addiction, which then extended to heroin and alcohol — although she did have band-mate Charlotte Caffey for company when she joined Alcoholics Anonymous. Gina Schock had a hole in her heart that nearly killed her.

Jane Wiedlin played with her miniature horse, Bunny Wailer, which she dressed in Rastafarian clothes. Kathy Valentine spearheaded the Go-Go's' move into film: She was the star of a

home movie in which she orders a stoned roadie to masturbate. He falls asleep, and our heroine sticks a vibrator up his ass. He doesn't wake up.

OUR EXPERTS SAY "They went for drugs and men: I wholeheartedly approve!" Griffin says. "But I bet that they got urinary tract infections."

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? Carlisle enjoyed a successful solo career. She suffered a nervous breakdown in 1994, however, after she was dropped by her record label; she now lives in France and recently posed naked for *Playboy*. Wiedlin played Joan of Arc in *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*. The band re-formed in both 1990 and 1995. In 2002, they re-re-re-formed and released a new album, *God Bless the Go-Go's*. The upcoming TV-movie biopic will explain everything.



Their favorite trick was photographing their pudenda.

Destiny's Child

Father Knowles best

THE STORY Originally a Houston four-piece formed in 1990 (when they were all 10) by their manager, Mathew Knowles, the father of group leader Beyoncé and uncle of Kelly Rowland.

Founding members LeToya Luckett and Latavia Roberson "left" after trying to fire Knowles. They filed a lawsuit contesting their dismissal, but settled it in 2002. Replacement Farrah Franklin soon packed her bags after walking out on an appearance on MTV's *All Access* and missing an Australian promotional

tour. Their professed Christian beliefs have been further tested by massive royalties, their huge following among drag queens and Beyoncé's appearance in *Austin Powers in Goldmember*.

OUR EXPERTS SAY "What's really creepy," Griffin says, "is not just that they all used to live in the Knowles household, but the hideous '80s clothes Beyoncé's mother makes them wear."

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? The three current Children have solo albums due out (on staggered release dates, so they don't compete). Luckett and Roberson are in the singing group Angel. Franklin has a solo career, of sorts. [BLENDER]



Beyoncé always calls "rock" in rock, paper, scissors.

Clockwise from top left: Courtesy of the Shaggs; Lynn Goldsmith/Corbis; Roger Ressmeyer/Corbis; Kwaku Abston/Corbis Outline

BED HEAD



music is life

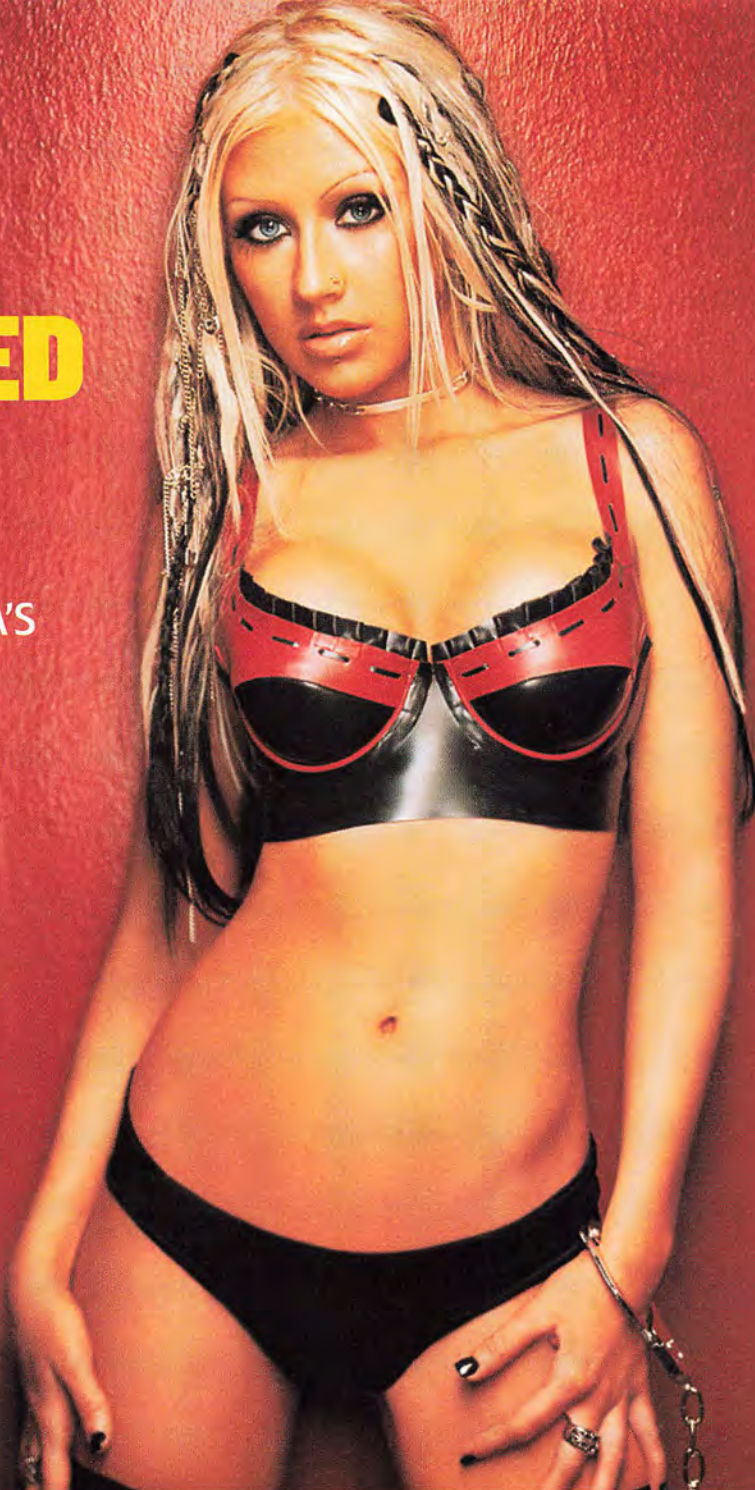
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Guest List

These guys are always "on the list."...



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XMAS SENSATION!



It's a Wonderful Life!

Eat your heart out, Santa! New Age superstar Chip Davis is truly America's beloved big-guy-with-a-beard come Christmas. Proof? His one-man band, **Mannheim Steamroller**, seduces millions of middle-aged housewives every yule with its "Elizabethan-style rock." And that's his own plane parked outside his mansion. "It's odd, isn't it?"

BY ADRIAN DEEVOY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SEAN MURPHY



CHARLES "CHIP" DAVIS, Mr. Christmas himself, is giving a guided tour of his headquarters, American Gramophone, just north of Omaha, Nebraska. Sipping from a cup of his signature-brand chai tea, he leads the way to a quiet corner of the premises, where it's forever the night before Christmas. "Kind of cozy, isn't it?" he says, beaming through his orange beard.

It's certainly kind of surreal. Before us is the den of a 1970s ski lodge, re-created in unsettling yuletide detail: the crackling fire, the tree, the presents and the fairy lights. The frosted windows bear the nose marks and mitten prints of excited children gaping in awe at this winter wonderland.

All the time, eerie Christmas music plays. Sleigh bells jingle merrily, recorders toot, French horns burp and drummer boys drum. The familiar festive tunes fill the air with all the magic and menace of a toy cupboard come to life.

It is this music that has made Davis — and his band, Mannheim Steamroller — synonymous with the snowy season. It has also made him unimaginably wealthy. Such is the ubiquity of Davis's joyful tinkling that it has now become as much a part of the Christmas experience as itchy sweaters and trapped gas.

The faux ski lodge, which Davis originally set up for an advertisement and then kept because "it would have been too awful to tear it all down," is a poignant introduction to his weird world, where ancient and modern, fact and fiction, real and unreal happily coexist.

"Everybody told me that the Christmas record was a bad idea," he says, speaking of his quintuple-platinum 1984 album, *Christmas*. "That it would end my

career. I remember people saying, 'A Christmas album is what you do when you have noplacelse to go and your career is over.' But something in me said, 'I don't care; I'm going to do it anyway.'"

But just what is it about this music that has led to sales of 28 million albums, and so enchants a nation when thoughts turn to reindeer and egg-based drinks?

"To me, the songs of Christmas contribute enormously to the atmosphere of Christmas," Davis says. "When you hear those songs at that time of year, it puts you in the spirit. Those songs make a connection to the tastes and smells that are unique to Christmas. The feel of the *air* is different at Christmas."

Perhaps the most baffling aspect of Davis's holiday albums is that he typically records them in the spring. Listening to the music, much less making it, out of season is an oddly uncomfortable experience. Like taking a shower in your socks, it's just wrong.

"I agree," the composer concurs. "But when I write, I typically get up at around 4:30 in the morning. It's dark out, and the studio is lit by pale blue moonlight and a single candle. It's pretty atmospheric. I can fool myself that it's any season."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

BEFORE CHIP DAVIS became the King of Christmas, he was known for having invented "classical rock" and, indirectly, the musical genre we have come to call New Age. Harpsichords and syndrums, fluttering flutes set to a firm backbeat: All of that is Davis's fault. He called it "Elizabethan rock & roll."

His *Fresh Aire* concept albums, the first of which he recorded in 1974, are phenomenally successful (seven in the series so far have gone gold). Many babies have been conceived to the seductive sounds on these deceptively easy-on-the-ear recordings.

But be warned: Mannheim Steamroller CDs are not for the fainthearted. They tackle monumental ideas: life, civilization, space travel, nature, philosophy and the daunting challenge of being half-Welsh. More frightening still, some of the tunes sound a bit like early Jethro Tull.

Fresh Aire 8 takes on the Big One: infinity. This is a subject Davis can go on and on about. In the darkness of his studio, we watch the DVD that accompanies his latest work. It is enjoyably nuts. As we free-fall through time and dimensions, and another giant blood cell explodes into the black beyond, *Blender* asks Davis if he spiked the tea.

"He's onto us," he chuckles, as a cartoon dog turns into a mailbox. →



Davis live: "How do you put this thing in reverse?"

"Everybody told me that the Christmas record would end my career."



"The thing is, Mrs. Claus just doesn't understand me. . . ." Chip Davis and admirers



Davis prepares to storm Yanni's castle.

"Looks like the acid is kicking in again!"

Davis is a lovable fellow with a round stomach, sports-casual clothing and a mischievous twinkle in his spectacles. He has been writing music since he was 6 and is a virtuoso on most instruments, from the bassoon to rock drums. Such is the ferocity of his kick-drum technique, in fact, that he recently had to have his right hip replaced.

But his cuddly exterior and man-child enthusiasm masks the mind of a shrewd player and a powerful businessman. Here is a man who, in many senses, is a perfect twenty-first-century role model for fellow musicians: He releases his own records, makes all his music in his own studios, deals directly with retailers, sells millions of albums (and numerous ancillary products, from cinnamon-infused hot chocolate to bath foam to Mannheim Steamroller fleece jackets) over the Internet, employs 50 people, tours seasonally and has a million-strong fan base of devoted Rollerheads who purchase his every semiquaver. Davis, in his own nice-sweatered way, is very punk rock.

"I can see how you could view it that way," he says with a smile, settling into his leather studio chair. "These days in retail, if you don't have a Top 20 hit and a powerful marketing campaign behind you, then you're not even going to get on the shelf. When I began mixing ancient and futuristic music, there was no place for me at all. Now, the underground punk kids face the same problem."

Not that Davis is especially down with new music. Though he expresses a keen interest in having remixers rework his music, he is not, it seems, a big rap or metal fan.

"I don't enjoy topics of violence," he says, frowning. "I think we have enough



He gets 364 days off a year, and he's still not happy!

of that in society. You can hear how violent the world is on the news; perhaps we don't need that in music, too."

Davis's own music, which is now being embraced by chilling post-ravers and musty Dungeons & Dragons types alike, sprang from his desire to write like the famous classical composers. "Then, as I got older," he says, "I became infatuated with folk music and some rock & roll. I began to intermingle those types of music. The music I ended up producing was a sort of experiment — you're sitting in a laboratory."

Detractors initially called him the Muzak Mozart, but in more enlightened circles, Mannheim Steamroller became



"Need a sax player?": The Clintons with the Davises

Davis, in his own nice-sweatered way, is very punk rock.



"What, no Ozzy?": The Mannheim Steamroller mall store

the official soundtrack for getting whacked out of your gourd on perception-shredding pot.

"I think people did do that," he says, affectionately running a hand over his Mini Moog synthesizer. "It was considered very hip music, and pot smoking was hip back then. Also, there was a lot of headbanger music around at the time, but here was some music they could use to persuade a girl. In fact, I got a lot of early sales in wine stores, because it was considered candlelight-and-wine music."

Another key to Davis's global success was the dawn of the hi-fi age. Just as his smoochy sounds could subliminally shift cases of Chianti, Mannheim Steamroller records, with their strange sonic properties, were considered excellent discs to demonstrate the capabilities of new technology. "Suddenly people were wanting to buy the record they heard in the hi-fi store," he marvels.

Ingenious retailing has become Davis's specialty. He began by boxing his CDs with free scented candles; now his albums come with everything from coffee to massage lotions. His "party set" includes a jazz-pop CD, a bottle of meat rub and a selection of condiments. Purists may find such salesmanship distasteful, but it has never been Davis's goal to impress the elite.

This refusal to be cool manifested itself most magnificently when, in an extraordinary career sidestep, Davis wrote and produced the music of C.W. McCall, a fictional country character who ruled the world in the mid-'70s with his timeless homage to CB radio, "Convoy."

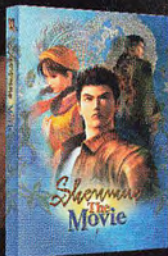
"It was unbelievable," says Davis. "I didn't know a thing about country music. I did it in the first place because an advertising client was doing a series of bread commercials in Iowa, and they needed a country track. Then out of nowhere we have this phenomenal smash." →

Somewhere in a city of 7 million
is the man who killed your father,
the man who knows why and the
woman who may be your only
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Davis threatens to slip a fan "the ol' Mannheim Steamroller."

How much money did you earn from "Convoy"?

"I know it sold 10 million copies."

How many of your own records have you sold?

"I've sold around 30 million of my own records. And I can make as much as \$4 or \$5 on each album."

This may be why Davis owns three houses, four horses and a Rockwell Saberliner jet. "I bought that 10 years ago," he says of the plane. "It gave me simultaneous buyer's and seller's remorse, which resulted in a big tummyache."

Talk of tummies reminds Davis that it's lunchtime. This being Omaha, the steak capital of America and possibly the world, there's minimal discussion about what the meal might be. Davis chucks two New York strips on the grill and wanders into the garden to gather salad fixings. "Sometimes," he confesses, squirting the steaks with his own Mesquite Dry Brushless Baste, "I just have the steak on its own, because the meat is so good I don't want to waste valuable chewing time on vegetables."

The steaks are indeed butter-soft and delicious, and as the wine flows the conversation becomes distinctly random. Asked if he has any interest in visiting the moon, he replies, "There have been times when I've felt like I've already been there." Later, while wandering around a few of his hundred acres, we enter a small cabin that houses his deep-space telescope. This is shortly after he has proudly shown off his crop circles. The grass in the circles is longer than the rest. It has a blue tint, and the tops of the blades are burned. "It's odd, isn't it?" he says, puzzled.

We visit another cabin in the forest, where Davis occasionally likes to spend

"I've sold 30 million records. And I can make \$4 or \$5 on each album."



the night communing with the elements. He points out the four outdoor microphones that feed the sounds of nature directly into his living room, and demonstrates his impressive ability to communicate telepathically with a pony. When asked to sum up who he is, he cryptically says, "The song of a bird. There's one particular bird, called a junko, which sings a very simple two-note song. When I call them, they'll come to me. They'll answer back and create harmonies and



Mannheim's special sauce

melodies with me. They come and land in the trees, and we'll sing together."

Finally, we visit a barn in which Davis keeps the family's archery equipment. This might explain why so many life-size rubber animals — a stag here, a grizzly there — are positioned throughout the grounds. "We shoot at them," Davis says with a shrug. "Aren't the animals incredible? I got them off the Internet."

Before we leave him to his make-believe world of eternal Christmas, sizzling steaks and birdsong symphonies, he must answer one question: Chip Davis, have you done, like, a lot of acid?

"No," says the New Age Santa, laughing. "I never actually did that sort of thing. It's amazing that I haven't, really, isn't it?" [BLENDER]

I LOOOVE THIS ONE! >>>>

Chip Davis's greatest CDs, rated by *Blender* and *Mom*!



FRESH AIRE III — SUMMER

AMERICAN GRAMAPHONE, 1979

★★★★

BLENDER SAYS Davis hit his stride on the third of Mannheim's quartet of seasonal concept albums, reconciling prog rock with love for the *Peanuts* theme.

MOM SAYS "Great for a dinner party to get the mood up. Wine, cheese and good friends."



FRESH AIRE INTERLUDES

AMERICAN GRAMAPHONE, 1981

★★★

BLENDER SAYS A compilation of the moody piano jams that dot *Fresh Aire I-IV*. Surprisingly effective as a "chill-out" record after a tough night of Dungeons & Dragons.

MOM SAYS "I get distracted by the little bird noises and things, but I love 'Mist' and 'Amber.'"



CHRISTMAS

AMERICAN GRAMAPHONE, 1984

★★★★

BLENDER SAYS The first, and still the finest, of Mannheim's Xmas records. Davis's impossibly chipper take on "Deck the Halls" has become a perennial irritant, lifting *Christmas* to sales of more than 5 million.

MOM SAYS "I bought this when it came out, and every year I buy extras to share."



C.W. McCALL'S GREATEST HITS

POLYDOR, 1990

★★

BLENDER SAYS Yee-haw! Chip Davis was the musical brain behind this novelty outlaw-trucker pop. Features the irresistibly hokey number 1 hit "Convoy."

MOM SAYS "Oh, no. I don't care for country music. Hey — you could probably make a song out of that!"



CHRISTMAS EXTRAORDINAIRE

AMERICAN GRAMAPHONE, 2001

★★★

BLENDER SAYS The Steamroller's latest holiday disc finds our jolly hero running low on inspiration, save a pleasantly apocalyptic "Auld Lang Syne."

MOM SAYS "I looove this one. It's part of my being, part of my heart." GABE SORIA

* Carol Murphy, 57, licensed psychotherapist and registered nurse. Thanks, Mom!

THERE'S NOTHING MOTHERLY ABOUT
MOTHER NATURE. EXCEPT MAYBE HER
BIG MOUNTAINOUS BREASTS.



Boundary Peak Parka™: Waterproof/breathable Omni-Tech® Storm Dry TN fabric w/Omni-Shield™ seam sealing • Removable non-pilling MTR Fleece™ liner • Oversized mesh vented pockets • Attached, visored, full-feature hood. For a dealer near you, call 1-800-MA BOYLE or visit www.columbia.com.



"I've got hot flashes to keep me warm. You'll need something that zips."

- Chairman Gert Boyle

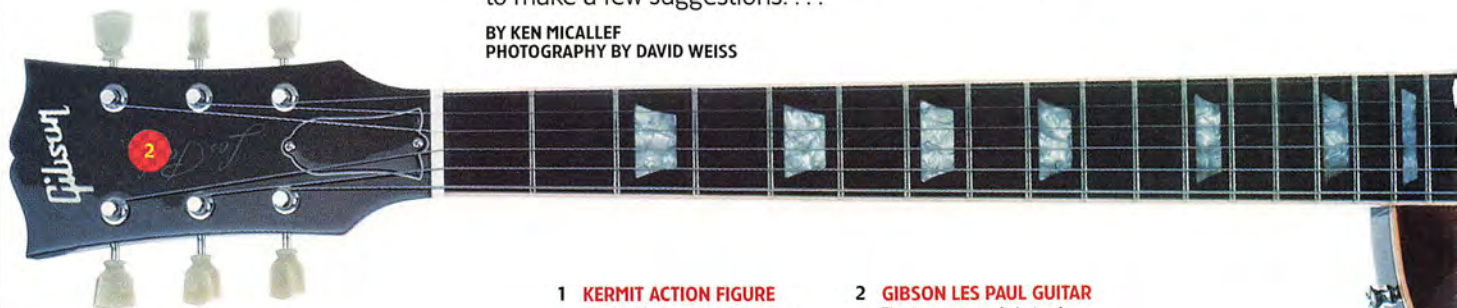
 **Columbia**
Sportswear Company®

Gift Guide



Stumped for present ideas this Christmas? Allow *Blender* to make a few suggestions. . . .

BY KEN MICALLEF
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID WEISS



YO, SANTA!

"I WANT MY two front teeth — and that new Mercedes, the one with the doors that go up. Like the car in *Back to the Future*."

MISSY ELLIOTT *rapper/songwriter/genius*

1 KERMIT ACTION FIGURE

Face it: You've wanted your own Kermit since *The Muppet Show* went off the air. Now he comes with his own TV camera and coffee mug. And the coolest Muppets are also desk- and dashboard-ready: Miss Piggy, Dr. Teeth, Fozzie Bear, Gonzo, even Dr. Bunsen Honeydew and Beaker! Yes! \$10 palisadestoy.com

2 GIBSON LES PAUL GUITAR

The instrument of choice for generations of rockers — without the Les Paul guitar, Jimmy Page and Slash would have been just two guys wiggling their fingers in thin air. There are 14 models available, from the **Special (\$998)** to the **Standard (\$3,306)**. And they all rock! gibson.com



3 MOTOROLA TALKABOUT T4300 WALKIE TALKIE

Who needs cell phones? Well, lots of people, clearly. But the T4300 is pretty cool, too, boasting an LCD window for quick navigation, and a keypad lock feature that prevents settings from being changed by mischievous little fingers. \$20 each motorola.com

4 GATEWAY GTW-P42M102 PLASMA TV

Buy this for your loved ones this Christmas, and they'll be able to watch TV like a rock star with a very, very large TV! Computer colossus Gateway introduces three high-definition plasma sets: giant 42-inch screens with an ultra-detailed color palette. Perfect for DVDs, HBO and uncomfortably close encounters with Ozzy, Sharon, Kelly and Jack. \$3,000 to \$6,000 gateway.com

5 DENON D-107 PRIME SOUND PERSONAL COMPONENT SYSTEM

Sleek high-end sound, with a unique vertical CD-loading mechanism and a Robocop-looking subwoofer firing dual five-inch woofers. That's a lot of woof. \$749 denon.com



Microsoft



Introducing the Microsoft® Windows® XP Media Center PC.

The advanced PC that knows how to play. With the Windows XP Media Center PC and its multi-talented remote control, the whole digital world is now totally at your command. Sure, it does stuff like work, e-mail, and surf the Web—with Internet access. But it really comes to life when it's time to play. Record and play your favorite TV shows. Play DVDs. Show off your digital photos. Or spin custom play-lists of your favorite digital tunes. Call the shots at the touch of a button—from anywhere in the room. So why go out, when it's all right here? To learn more, visit us at microsoft.com/windowsxp/mediacenter



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11



13

"MY MOM, dad, sister Nicole and I are going to Maui. Hopefully no one will see me in my bathing suit! I've been in the studio and on the road so long that I have a 'studio tan'. I might scare the tourists."

MICHELLE BRANCH, 19-year-old radio sweetheart



14



15

"I'VE BEEN A single girl for a while now, so Santa should put a nice young gentleman under my tree. He should have goals and a lot of respect for himself, me and his mama. He could cut the grass with no shirt on and sweat while I watch movies all day long in our house in Houston."

KELLY ROWLAND, Destiny's Child's honey-voiced second-in-command



12

11 PHILIPS DVDR 985 DVD RECORDER

The most affordable DVD recorder of its category, with special features including a pop-up mini-menu for programming options (camcorder, TV, CD, VCR) and high-end video technology. It's so simple to program, even a grownup can figure it out.

\$900 philips.com

14 SONICBLUE RIOCENTRAL

Quit wasting your nights alphabetizing your CD collection. RioCentral's twice as big as the biggest iPod: It can burn and store 650 CDs on its 40GB hard drive — not to mention search the Web for music to download. So now you can spend your nights alphabetizing your DVDs!

\$1,500 sonicblue.com

12 IRIVER IMP-350 SLIM X/MP3 PLAYER

You can never be too rich or too thin. This CD/MP3 player, the width of two CD cases, puts all display and menu functions on a tiny remote on the headphone cable, granting access to a tuner and graphic equalizer — and to the hundreds of songs on an MP3 CD.

\$150 iriver.com

15 DIESEL CLOTHES

Christmas dinner's coming up. Isn't it time your bratty cousins knew you've arrived? Just show up wearing Diesel's jacket, short-sleeved shirt and black jeans — that'll shut them up.

\$550, jacket; **\$80**, shirt; **\$150**, jeans. diesel.com

16 KENWOOD/SIRIUS SATELLITE RADIO

Your local classic-rock station has just played "Layla" for the seventeenth time in a row — and you didn't even like it in the first place! Time to give your designated driver a Kenwood FM1 modulator car-stereo adapter with its 60 channels of music and 40 sports, news and entertainment stations. **\$230**, adapter; **\$12.95**, monthly subscription. kenwoodusa.com



16



6 RADIO SHACK ZIPZAPS MICRO RCS

It's the fast and the furious, scaled to fit inside your pocket! These Porsche 911s, Chrysler PT Cruisers and other radio-controlled racers are tinier than cell phones. They can rev up to 21,500 RPMs, and they're fully recharged in 45 seconds. Can you say that about your Kia Sportage? No, you can't! \$20 radioshack.com



7 TOSHIBA PORTÉGÉ 2000 LAPTOP

The world's thinnest laptop — slightly more than a half-inch thick — is fast and smart, too, with a 20GB hard drive and a six-and-a-half-hour battery. So light you can hold it in one hand and type with the other — in case you need a lap dance on deadline. \$2,000 toshiba.com



"I JUST WANT to chill for the holidays, maybe go to the South of France and relax on the beach. If we're talking about actual gifts, I wouldn't mind a white chinchilla fur."

EVE, first lady of the Ruff Ryders

8 TIMEX TMX2 MP3 SYSTEM/2

This compact audio-video watch holds two hours of MP3s and displays e-pictures and documents. The perfect gift for someone who wants to pretend he's James Bond — but without having sex in a variety of amazingly exotic locales. \$150 timex.com



9 SONY CYBER-SHOT U DSC-U10 CAMERA

Want to capture the full majesty of Crazy Bob's chunk-blowing when you paint the town red this New Year's Eve? The tiny Sony Cyber-Shot can handle five standard-resolution shots in rapid succession. And it's highly portable — as small as your cheek, or smaller, if you've got, like, weirdly huge cheeks. \$200 sonystyle.com



"I WANT A six-foot Indica tree, because I love weed. I was in rehab, but I relapsed. Not 100 percent — I'm on marijuana maintenance."

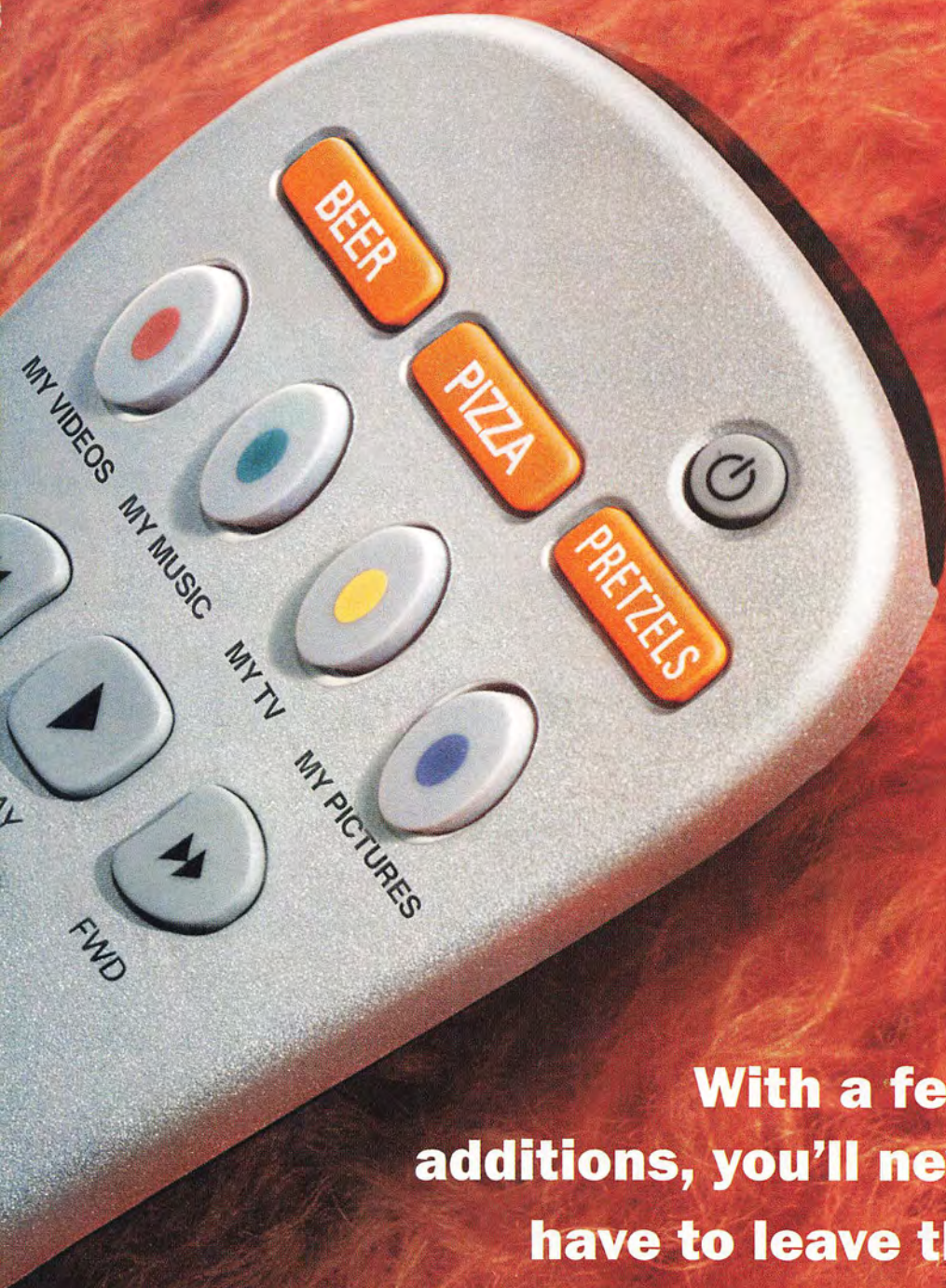
SHIFTY SHELLSHOCK, off-the-wagon Crazy Town frontman

10 APPLE IPOD-20GB MP3 PLAYER

PC users, rejoice! You don't have to use a Mac anymore to enjoy the iPod. And it's still smaller than a deck of cards, with enough room to hold the music of several hundred CDs. Games and other programming features should keep you busy at least until they invent something even neater. \$500 apple.com







**With a few minor
additions, you'll never
have to leave the couch.**

50 GREATEST ALBUMS OF 2002



From those CDs that had us dancing like maniacs to those that made us cry like babies, *Blender* presents 2002's finest recorded pleasures. Plus: The stars who made them recall the year's highs, lows and how many times they threw up. . .

BY JASON ADAMS, JOHN AIZLEWOOD, MICHAEL AZERRAD, CLARK COLLIS, JAMES HUNTER, ROB KEMP, DORIAN LYNSEY, BEN MITCHELL, ALEXIS PETRIDIS, MAT SNOW, ROB TANNENBAUM AND JONAH WEINER



50 RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS BY THE WAY

WARNER BROS.

They shouldn't even be breathing, let alone getting better

Worthy of a place on this list for back-from-the-dead guitarist John Frusciante's contributions alone, *By the Way* finds the Chili Peppers refining the melodic template of 1999's *Californication* to even greater effect. True, anyone looking for rock-rap will do so in vain. But with the pop-metal anthem "Dosed" or the flamenco-flavored "Cabron Cabron" in its stead, only the narrow-minded could complain.



49 EL-P FANTASTIC DAMAGE

DEFINITIVE JUX

Hip-hop for hip nerds

Underground hip-hop mogul/rapper/producer El-P zips through big words and lofty phrases as if he's being paid by the syllable. He's the founder of New York's Definitive Jux label, and his devotees see him as an indie David battling hip-hop's bling-obsessed Goliaths. On *Fantastic Damage*, his fractured rhythms and noise-drenched beats — such as those in the paranoid fantasy "Deep Space 9mm" — win over rapheads, indie rockers and electronica snobs alike.



48 ORCHESTRA BAOBAB SPECIALISTS IN ALL STYLES

WORLD CIRCUIT/NONESUCH

From Senegal, the greatest band you've never heard

Formed as the house band at the Baobab, a club for Senegalese government officials, this recently reunited 11-member juggernaut became a world-music institution on the strength of its ingenious adaptation of Cuban rhythms. Slickly produced by countryman Youssou N'Dour, their first album since 1982's classic *Pirate's Choice* glides by on a swinging, guitar-accentuated groove.



47 ANDREW W.K. I GET WET

ISLAND

Party as noun, verb and direct object

Ten seconds into Andrew Wilkes-Krier's full-length debut, the Detroit native bellows "It's time to party!" — and the brutal, mindless fun long missing from modern metal comes crashing back in one fell whoop. With all the goofy, shameless good cheer of a slobbering Saint Bernard, *I Get Wet* is death metal twisted into a Coors Light commercial.



46 THE ROOTS PHRENOLOGY

MCA

Rap-rock with a brain and a 'fro

The Roots have always appealed to rap aesthetes, but on their blistering sixth album, *Phrenology*, hip-hop's best live band welcomes a new guitarist and reaches out to the melting-pot kids raised on Run-DMC and Kid Rock. "Thought @ Work" channels the squall of classic Public Enemy, while "The Seed (2.0)" hustles like *Miss You-era* Stones. A black-rock breakthrough.



Andrew W.K.: surly attitude model's own

The Hives:
Unlike here, ascots
are acceptable in
Sweden.

45

THE HIVES
VENI VIDI VICIOUS

BURNING HEART/EPITAPH/SIRE

What's Swedish for "Hey, ho, let's go!"?

"My boss, he's a probable bore!" howls Howlin' Pelle Almqvist on "Supply and Demand," his searing critique of capitalist exploitation, kicking in the killer rhyme: "Put me hands and knees on scrubbable floor!" The best stoopid/clever garage-punk act in captivity has the road-hardened chops, the badditude, the foundation myth and youth on its side.





Avril Lavigne loves embarrassing small boys with her skateboard skills.



44 AVRIL LAVIGNE LET GO

ARISTA

Canadian skater girl rocks up MTV

While spiritual big sister Pink communes with the ghost of Janis Joplin, Avril Lavigne channels the late alt-teen magazine *Sassy*: On her debut, the 18-year-old is a gimlet-eyed advice columnist with a guitar, waging a one-girl war on phoniness. Shrewd new-wave production makes the music bite, and the chewy smashes "Complicated" and "Sk8er Boi" have inspired girls across the nation to pick up guitars and swipe their dad's neckties.

"I Get Sweaty"

Avril Lavigne explains her obsession with tank tops, Josh Hartnett and the White Stripes

How are you, and where are you?
I'm fine, thank you. I'm in a hotel room in New York.

Admit it: The teen-pop boom is kaput, partly because of you and a few others. Is there any one bubblegum singer you were really gunning for?

I can't answer that. My big mouth has already gotten me in too much trouble this year. But I will say that my music is different than many young female artists': I write my own music, I play guitar, I don't let other people dictate my image. I dress normally.

What — a necktie over a tank top?

I wear tank tops because I get sweaty onstage, and the necktie... I just do weird things sometimes.

How would you rate your year, on a scale of 1 to 10?

My year has been a 10. I had so much fun, and my album has gone triple plati-

num. Most importantly, I'm happy. Can I ask for anything more?

What was your favorite album of the year?

I totally love the White Stripes' *White Blood Cells*.

Who were your hero and villain of the year?

My hero is Spider-Man. And no one has been enough of an asshole to me to be a "villain."

Sex symbol?

Josh Hartnett. He's sooo hot.

How many times did you vomit this year?

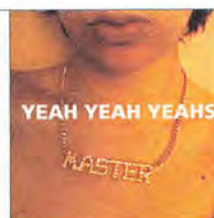
Not very many, really. Maybe 10 or 20 times.

How will you be spending New Year's Eve?

We might be playing the Times Square New Year's Rockin' Eve. But if we're not, then I'd like to go get fucked up with my band. **ROB KEMP**



My, what short arms you have, Avril.



43 YEAH YEAH YEAHS YEAH YEAH YEAHS (EP)

TOUCH AND GO

Art-punk trio's 14-minute manifesto

It takes a special band to be acclaimed as the future on the strength of just five tracks. This blink-and-you'll-miss-it debut shows that this New York trio is exactly that. Arty, angry and sexy all at once, the Yeah Yeah Yeahs have a born star in magnetic front-woman Karen O. "It's our time to be hated," she yelps on "Our Time." *Au contraire!*



Yeah Yeah Yeahs: yeah!

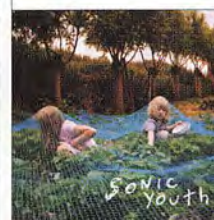


42 CAM'RON COME HOME WITH ME

ROC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM

Harlem bruiser scores crossover smash

He's handsome, played All-American hoops in high school and talks about doing it with your mom: Cam'ron is the most popular kid and an insufferable bully rolled into one. Behind the power of the unshakeable thug jam "Oh Boy," Cam'ron's fourth album proves two things: One, there are indeed second acts in hip-hop; and two, the man knows how to write one hell of a pop hook.

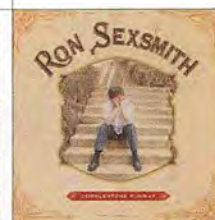


41 SONIC YOUTH MURRAY STREET

GEFFEN

Avant-garde noiseiks rediscover the art of the tune

While devotees of Sonic Youth's eardrum-scouring guitar drone might have stuck with New York's venerable art-rockers during the late '90s, fans of *Sister and Goo* often found themselves thinking, "Hey, didn't these guys used to write great songs, too?" So they wrote a few more, such as "Disconnection Notice" and "Karen Revisited," making *Murray Street* their most welcoming, and welcome, release in over a decade.



40 RON SEXSMITH COBBLESTONE RUNWAY

NETTWERK AMERICA

The singer-songwriter's singer-songwriter

A spiritual sibling of Wilco's *Yankee Hotel Foxtrot*, the sixth album from this underappreciated Canadian folkie experiments with all manner of sonic weirdness. But, again like *Yankee*, what resonates most are the songs themselves, with meticulously detailed laments like "Former Glory" and the hymnlike "God Loves Everyone" making a persuasive case for Sexsmith as the Sweet Baby James of his generation.



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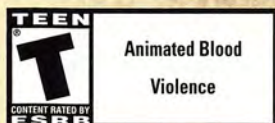
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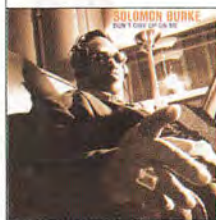
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THE 50 GREATEST ALBUMS OF 2002



39 SOLOMON BURKE DON'T GIVE UP ON ME ANTI-/FAT POSSUM

Soul legend sends the young pretenders scurrying

No Florida retirement home for 66-year-old "King of Rock and Soul" Solomon Burke. Instead, he enlists some of the world's best songwriters, from Bob Dylan to Elvis Costello, for a remarkable comeback effort. Whether getting his pipes around Tom Waits's tall tales or Brian Wilson's wistful pop, Burke makes each song his own. Astonishing fact: The combined age of every songwriter on this disc tops 700 years!



38 MARIANNE FAITHFULL KISSIN' TIME VIRGIN

Beck, Billy Corgan and others update rock's glamorous grandma

"Leave me to these thugs and creeps," her weathered croak intones, "who want to fuck a nun on drugs." "Sliding Through Life on Charm," written by Pulp's Jarvis Cocker and inspired by Faithfull's memoir, highlights an album where rock's most disreputable grande dame plays den mother to today's alt-rock aristocrats, with Billy Corgan's "Wherever I Go" tunelessly coaxing out her inner convent girl.



37 BETH ORTON DAYBREAKER ASTRALWERKS

Heartbreak has rarely sounded so damned uplifting

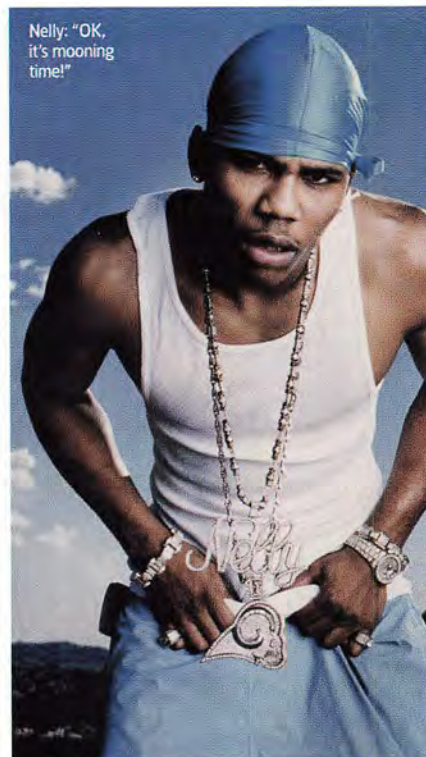
It is a brave singer who invites Ryan Adams and Emmylou Harris to sing alongside her. Or, in the case of Beth Orton, a very, very good one. Despite the array of guests on Orton's third album, it's her swooping, luminescent vocals that dominate as she relates her lump-in-the-throat tales of love, loss and, well, more loss. Cool in every sense.



36 CLINIC WALKING WITH THEE DOMINO

Masked conceptualists ride again!

They're Radiohead's favorite band, and it's obvious why. Bucking the trend of earnest introspection common to their U.K. peers, this Liverpoolian quartet has sangfroid, sardonic style and a great record collection. *Walking With Thee*'s driving title song evokes the garage psychedelia of the Seeds, but elsewhere on Clinic's second album are nods to krautrock, '80s electro, Augustus Pablo's dub reggae and John Carpenter soundtracks.



Nelly: "OK, it's mooning time!"

The 20 Best Singles of 2002

Is it hot in herre, or is it just us?

- 1 NELLY "HOT IN HERRE"
- 2 EMINEM "WITHOUT ME"
- 3 MISSY ELLIOTT "WORK IT"
- 4 THE WHITE STRIPES "FELL IN LOVE WITH A GIRL"
- 5 CLIPSE "GRINDIN'"
- 6 AVRIL LAVIGNE "COMPLICATED"
- 7 COLDPLAY "IN MY PLACE"
- 8 KYLIE MINOGUE "CAN'T GET YOU OUT OF MY HEAD"
- 9 THE VINES "GET FREE"
- 10 LINKIN PARK "IN THE END"
- 11 TRUTH HURTS "ADDICTIVE"
- 12 THE HIVES "HATE TO SAY I TOLD YOU SO"
- 13 PINK "DON'T LET ME GET ME"
- 14 CAM'RON "OH BOY"
- 15 FAITH HILL "CRY"
- 16 NORAH JONES "DON'T KNOW WHY"
- 17 ELVIS VS. JXL "A LITTLE LESS CONVERSATION"
- 18 SCARFACE "ON MY BLOCK"
- 19 ANDREW W.K. "PARTY HARD"
- 20 THE RAPTURE "HOUSE OF JEALOUS LOVERS"



We can't get Kylie Minogue out of those clothes. Goddamn!



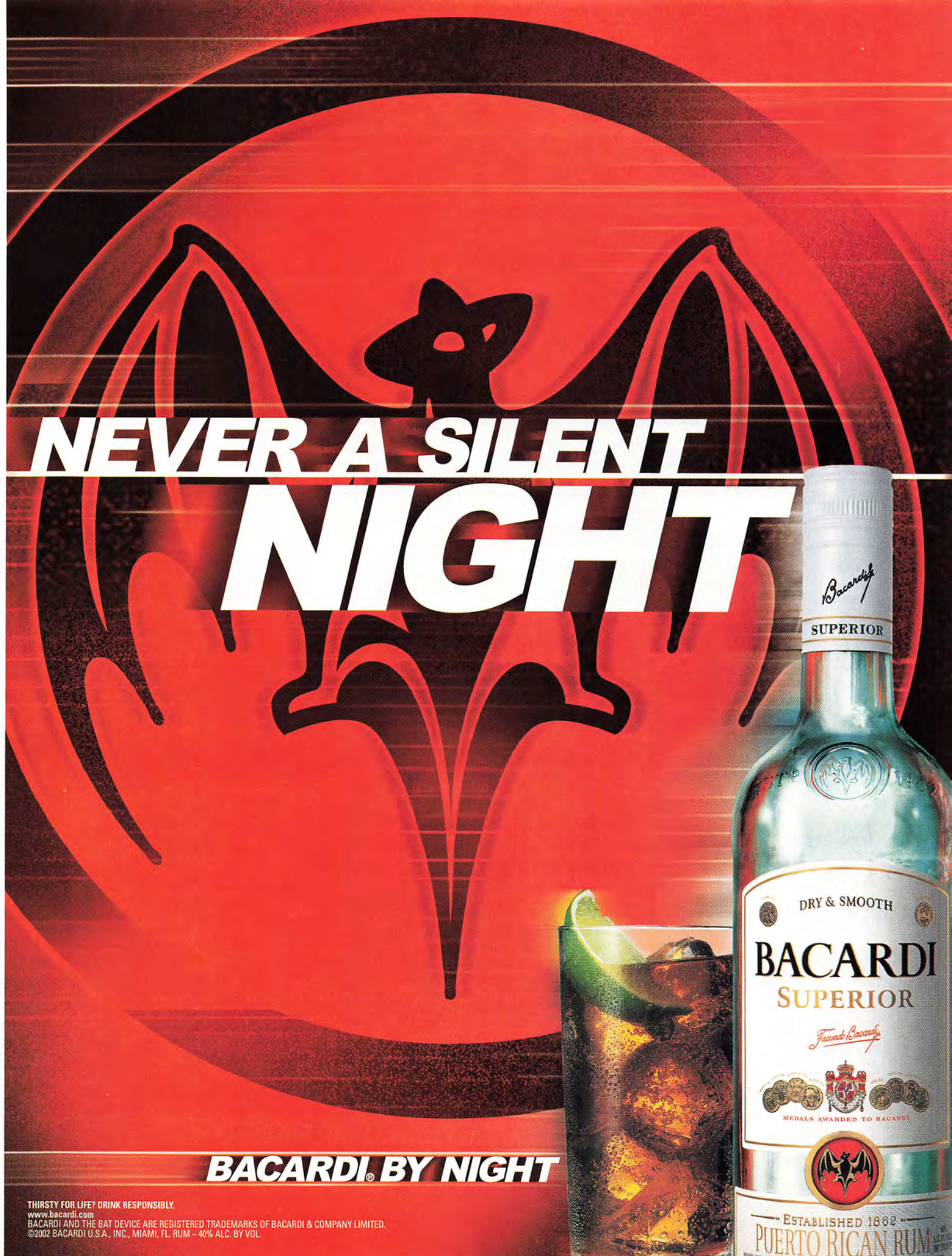
Disturbed regret not taking the elevator.



35 DISTURBED BELIEVE REPRISE

Big ideas, big riffs, big sales

Disturbed's David Draiman is concerned with weightier matters than the insufficient toilet training that so preoccupies modern metal bands. "Waiting for your modern messiah/To take away all the hatred," the pierced-lipped prophet barks with evangelical zeal on the thunderous "Liberate." The Chicago quartet's severe second album tackles big topics (life, death, redemption, deceit) without whining or flinching. This is serious business: metal by grown men.



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THE 50 GREATEST ALBUMS OF 2002

To appear taller, Bruce always makes Stevie scooch down during shows.



34 BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN AND THE E STREET BAND THE RISING

COLUMBIA

The Rudy Giuliani
of rock

For Bruce Springsteen, rock & roll is like religion — only with better amplifiers. When faced with the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, the Boss responded by reuniting with the E Street Band, his beloved folk-rock orchestra. The record's view is tipped in the title: Brightened by gospel choruses, the songs aren't about what has fallen, but what still stands.

"It's Rock & Roll. Remember That?"

Steven Van Zandt, E Street Band guitarist and Silvio on *The Sopranos*, damn well does

How are you, and where are you?
I am pretty good, and I'm in Minneapolis — we're playing here tonight.

When Bruce Springsteen started writing *The Rising*, did he sit you all down and explain that it was going to be about September 11?

No. As a matter of fact, it didn't really hit home for me until I listened to the whole thing beginning to end. Could you hold on a second? [A muffled altercation ensues between Van Zandt and the steward bringing him his breakfast.] Sorry. . .

Are they not treating you like a star over there?

No, I'm afraid they are! I ordered eggs, and they just charged me for the toast as well!

You have a syndicated radio show, *Little Steven's Underground Garage*. How's that going?

Amazingly well. But it was World War III getting it on. We went to all the big syndicators and said, "Look,

I want to do this thing called garage rock." They said, "What the fuck is that?" I said, "It's rock & roll — remember that?"

You must be pleased with the success of bands like the Vines and the White Stripes.

Without false humility, I feel absolutely, totally responsible for that.

Each time you start reading a *Sopranos* script, do you think, "This could be the one in which my character gets whacked"?

They're more civilized than that. The executive producer will call those who are on the way out, so it's not a surprise when they open the script.

Album of the year?

Oh, God, so many. There's a group called the Shazam, there's Cottonmouth, the Greenhornes, Creatures of the Golden Dawn.

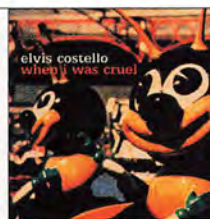
How many times have you vomited this year?

None, I'm happy to say.

CLARK COLLIS



Steven protects his "bada-bings."



33 ELVIS COSTELLO WHEN I WAS CRUEL

ISLAND

He's 47 years old and still really, really pissed

Rumors abound of Elvis Costello's middle-age mellowing — he composes ballet scores and sips port with Burt Bacharach — but you wouldn't repeat them to the man who made *this* album. Backed by two-thirds of the Attractions (no Bruce Thomas), Costello is in fine foam-mouthed form here. As "Alibi" and the title track prove, there's no one who does bile better.



Elvis Costello: compulsive pulse taker



32 THE STREETS ORIGINAL PIRATE MATERIAL

VICE/ATLANTIC

Excellent British hip-hop. Who knew?

British hip-hop was more joke than genre until 22-year-old Mike Skinner dropped U.K. garage, house and reggae into the mix for a startlingly unique debut. His conversational mic style might not give Ja Rule any sleepless nights, but his poignant and funny narratives about inner-city Britain bring the spirit of the *Specials* to the pirate-radio generation.



31 PHISH LIVE PHISH 11: 11.17.97

ELEKTRA

Thirty-three hours and 5,000 guitar solos

Phish spent 2002 on sabbatical. During their vacation, the lazy sods released 10 new volumes of the *Live Phish* series and performed on a *Simpsons* episode in which Homer gets his toke on. The peak of *Live Phish* might be number 11, a grooveful prog-rock jam from an epic 1997 show in Denver that culminates in a 23-minute ramble through "You Enjoy Myself." As Homer Simpson might say, "Mmm . . . solos!"



30 DJ SHADOW THE PRIVATE PRESS

MCA

Where do the samples come from? Only Shadow knows. . .

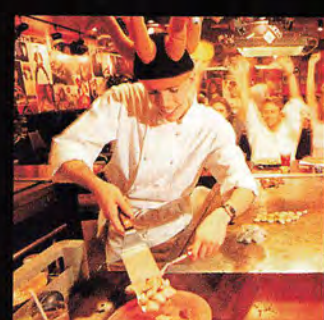
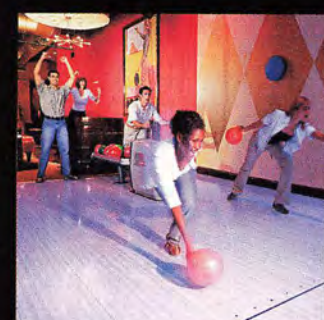
One fan's Web site calls DJ Shadow "the original DJ savior." Listening to *The Private Press*, his long-awaited follow-up to 1996's landmark *Endtroducing . . .*, you can see the point. Painstakingly constructed from hundreds of wickedly obscure samples — Utah bell ringers? — the furious "Blood on the Motorway" and the spooked "Six Days" sound entirely unlike anything else in dance or hip-hop.

COLUMBIA DENVER HOUSTON INDIANAPOLIS LAS VEGAS LONG ISLAND LOUISVILLE

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PENCILS UP! EYES FORWARD! IT'S TIME TO TAKE . . .

The 2002 *Blender* Music Exam!

Pay attention, pop stars! It's time to cast our foggy minds back over the events of 2002 and see which musicians were paying attention and which were looking out the window. Feel free to play along at home. Your time starts now. . . .



Honk if you're married to Ozzy Osbourne.



VANESSA CARLTON
Spunky piano prodigy



HOWLIN' PELLE ALMQVIST, THE HIVES
Scandinavian king of the non sequitur



KELLY OSBOURNE
Foulmouthed teen multimedia phenom



FABOLOUS
Monosyllabic, mush-mouthed rapper



RHETT MILLER
Alt-country heartthrob

1 Complete the following Nelly lyric: "It's getting hot in herre, so . . ."	" . . . come ova here wit dat Band-Aid and gimme sum-a dat man-luv."	" . . . take off all your clothes." ✓ 	" . . . turn on the fucking air conditioning!"	" . . . take off all your clothes." ✓ 	" . . . let's move somewhere further north."
2 Which member of the Who passed away this year?	John Entwistle. Long live the spider! ✓	The Ox; he played bass. ✓	John Entwistle. ✓	The what? 	The Ox. Not much funny in this one. ✓
3 In September, what did Michael Jackson say he was quitting the music business to concentrate on?	Smooth young boys. 	Crazy PR stunts?	More facelifts.	World peace.	Insurance. Can't blame him; not everybody can "make it."
4 What did an enraged Sharon Osbourne hurl into her neighbors' garden in an episode of MTV's <i>The Osbournes</i> ?	A ham. Figures. ✓ 	Don't know. I don't watch television.	A ham. ✓	A snake. 	An epithet?
5 In June, R. Kelly pleaded innocent to how many felony counts of child pornography?	There's more than one?	At least one.	Too fucking many.	Twenty-nine counts. 	Number One or Number Two.
6 On his single "Without Me," whom did Eminem describe as "a 36-year-old baldheaded fag"?	His mom?	Moby. ✓ 	Moby. ✓	Moby. ✓	His own mother — can you believe that?
7 Which part of her body was it rumored Kylie Minogue had lifted?	The part that makes it impossible for her to do the robot. 	Are you sure you're not a British magazine?	Everything!	Her butt. ✓ 	Her skirt — naughty girl!
8 What was unique about the video for the White Stripes' "Fell in Love With a Girl"?	Married brother and sister. No fair. 	It was actually good.	Legos. ✓	Lego-looking cartoons. ✓	It's a good song and MTV actually played it!
9 What kind of bucket does Guns N' Roses guitarist Buckethead wear on his head?	KFC — and he gets sooo much money. ✓	A paper one. Designed to hold dead birds.	KFC bucket. ✓ 	KFC. ✓	The magical kind that makes him believe he's somewhere else.
10 Whom did Nas hope to "mock lynch" at a radio station-sponsored concert this summer?	Christina Aguilera — he thought <i>TRL</i> ers might enjoy auto-erotic asphyxiation.	Your editor.	I don't fucking know. I don't listen to rap.	Jay-Z. ✓	Eminem's mother. See, apparently she's a real bitch.
11 How did Bob Dylan surprise the audience at this year's Newport Folk Festival?	He eerily started to pronounce all words with the crispness of a spring morning dew. 	He went electric. Again.	No idea. 	He brought out Eminem.	He apologized for plugging in an electric guitar, which led to bands like Creed.
12 Who is Norah Jones's father?	The guy who turned the Beatles into stoners. Well done, Ravi. ✓ 	Probably Quincy. Or Steve from the Sex Pistols.	Quincy Jones?	Mr. Jones. 	Apu Nahasapeemapetilon.
FINAL SCORES	4	3	5	6 WINNER!	1

1. " . . . TAKE OFF ALL YOUR CLOTHES." 2. JOHN ENTWISTLE. A.K.A. "THE OX." 3. ACTING. 4. A HAM. 5. 21. 6. MOBY. 7. HER BUTT. 8. LEGOS WERE USED TO DEPICT THE BAND. 9. A KFC BUCKET. 10. JAY-Z. 11. HE WORE A WIG AND A FALSE BEARD. 12. STAR VIRTUOSO RAVI SHANKAR.



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29 THE POLYPHONIC SPREE THE BEGINNING STAGES OF ...

GOOD

Former Tripping Daisy members return with half of Dallas in tow

It shouldn't work, but it does: 24 Texans in white robes, performing "choral symphonic pop" that's equal parts Pet Sounds-era Brian Wilson and Bert and Ernie from *Sesame Street*. There are explosive choruses, crashing orchestrations and a choir singing its heart out. Even without their elaborate revival-meeting-on-PCP stage show, it's hard to imagine music that could induce more smiles.



28 SHERYL CROW C'MON, C'MON INTERSCOPE

Age ain't nothing but a number

In which the classic-rock chanteuse jettisons the dark mood of her last two albums and becomes the good-time girl nonpareil again. Ably assisted by Lenny Kravitz, Don Henley and Dixie Chick Natalie Maines, Crow, who recently turned 40, rebounds from bad breakup to worse breakup with Stones-y swagger and Fleetwood Mac delicacy. *C'mon, C'mon's* title track may be her finest, most indomitable moment yet.



Ashanti loves to carve hats out of really big mushrooms.



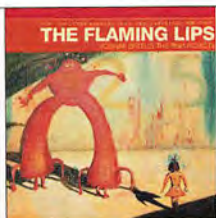
27 CORNERSHOP HANDCREAM FOR A GENERATION V2

A dazzling return for England's grumpiest duo

Tijinder Singh and Ben Ayres throw disparate musical styles together with a confidence and abandon that recalls early-'80s Clash. Here, you'll find Stones-esque boogie, dub reggae, house music and deep-fried funk, sitars and a children's choir — plus lyrics about soft rock and supermodels, two of *Blender's* favorite things.



The Flaming Lips' Wayne Coyne plays the world's smallest synth.



26 THE FLAMING LIPS YOSHIMI BATTLES THE PINK ROBOTS WARNER BROS.

Acid-rock oddballs grow old gracefully

On their eleventh album, the psychedelic Oklahomans hit both middle age and their creative peak, crafting a lavish, electronically enhanced opus about life, death and, er, pink robots. Onstage, they wield glove puppets and balloons, but there's nothing gimmicky about these songs of love and loss.



25 ASHANTI ASHANTI MURDER INC./DEF JAM

Multiplatinum debut from every gangsta's dream girl

The heir apparent to Aaliyah made her name as R&B's premier "hook girl" — her sleek choruses elevated Ja Rule's "Always on Time" and Fat Joe's "What's Luv." The Glen Cove, New York, native's solo bow marked her as 2002's pop debutante — whether she's pining after an unresponsive swain (the DeBarge-sampling "Foolish") or celebrating new love ("Happy"), the 22-year-old Ashanti is coquettishness itself.



24 SPOON KILL THE MOONLIGHT MERGE

Austin, Texas, brainiacs jump into an art-pop time machine

Tense, jumpy tunes about drugs and indie bands, full of keyboards that pogo in place — someone's been listening to a 1981 mix tape! Britt Daniel, the Austin guitarist who leads Spoon, writes about post-collegiate life with high-SAT smarts and sings with a distinctive, dude-you-need-some-Sudafed nasality. Spoon's fourth album confirms them as the art-pop heirs to Talking Heads and the Pixies.



23 JOHNNY CASH AMERICAN IV: THE MAN COMES AROUND LOST HIGHWAY

One of his best; hopefully not his last

Cash isn't in the best of health these days, but his fourth collaboration with producer Rick Rubin finds his vocal cords, at least, in top form as he rumbles, Methuselahlike, through originals ("Sam Hall") and covers ("Bridge Over Troubled Water," Sting's "I Hung My Head"). His version of Depeche Mode's "Personal Jesus," in particular, should have Dave Gahan & Co. mulling a relocation to Nashville.



22 SLEATER-KINNEY ONE BEAT KILL ROCK STARS

Pop on the outside, punk on the inside

The mighty Northwest trio expands its reach on album six, augmenting caustic post-September 11 rants and maternal meditations with horns, synths, even a male singer. There are Zeppelin-esque stomps and Bangles-like skips, but their punk heart remains front and center.



Sleater-Kinney await the firing squad.



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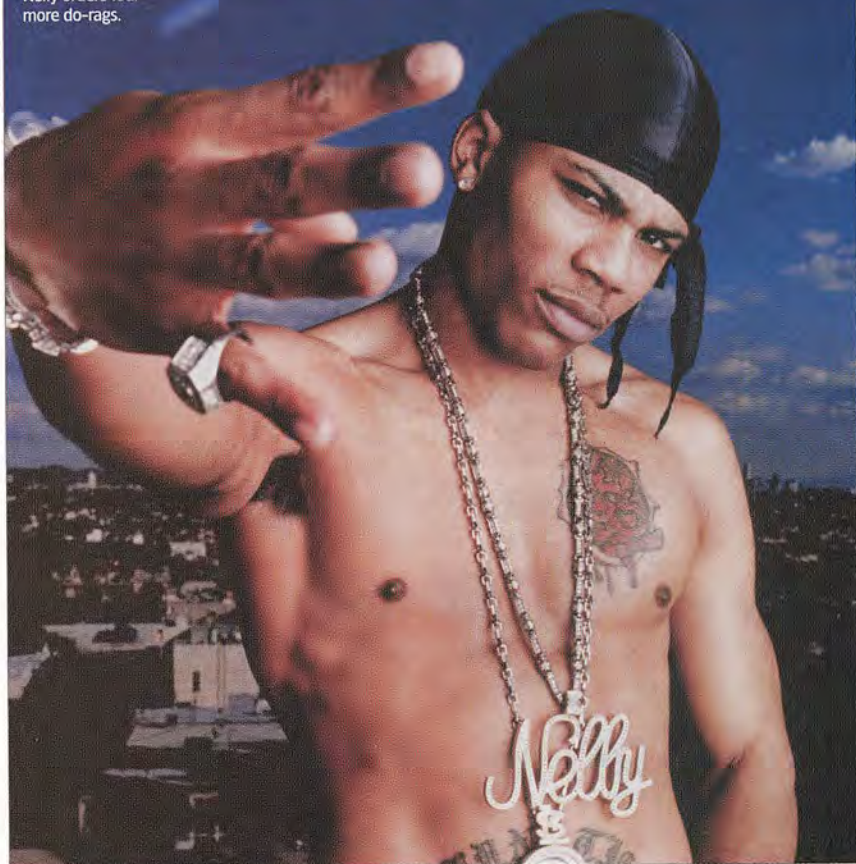
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THE 50 GREATEST ALBUMS OF 2002

Nelly orders four more do-rags.



21 NELLY NELLYVILLE FO' REEL/UNIVERSAL

The emperor of crossover rap keeps his crown

Rolexes and Bentleys? Feh. For St. Louis pop-rap kingpin Cornell Hayes, the ultimate bling-bling accessory is his own town, where every citizen receives "40 acres and a pool," hot people take off all their clothes and the unstoppable "Hot in Herre" plays 24/7. Nelly's second CD shows he still has charm to spare; that age-old tradition of bragging about women and money never sounded so good-humored.

"I Was Up All Night Partying!"

Just a day in the life of **Nelly**, the world's biggest rap star

How are you, and where are you?

I'm all right. We're in Albany, New York, putting the live show together with Lil Wayne, Fabolous and Amerie.

You released "Country Grammar" in 2000 and "Hot in Herre" this year. What do you know about making perfect summer singles that the rest of the world doesn't?

I don't know, dirty! We're doing what comes natural to us.

Is Christina Aguilera ripping off your St. Louis slang by spelling the title of her new song "Dirty"?

As long as she recognizes where it's coming from and as long as she doesn't take credit for something she didn't bring to the table, then it's fine. But she's talented, though — the girl can blow.

What was your favorite album of 2002?

Trick Daddy. *Thug Holiday* is hot.

How would you rate the year, on a scale of 1 to 10?

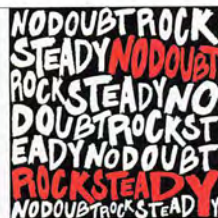
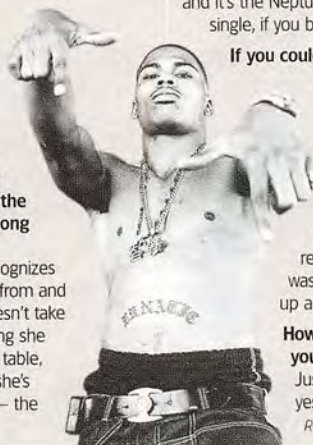
Seven — so far, so good. I don't know what a 10 is. I thought "Country Grammar" was a 10, and this year, I got my first number 1 single ever — and it's the Neptunes' first number 1 single, if you believe that.

If you could relive one day over and over again, as in the movie *Groundhog Day*, which one would you choose?

Probably the day my album was released [July 25]. It was a big day — I was up all night partying!

How many times did you vomit this year?

Just three times — all yesterday!



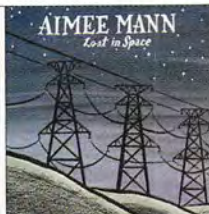
20 NO DOUBT ROCK STEADY INTERSCOPE

Adorable Gwen, sure, but sophisticated omnipop, too

Defined by "Hey Baby" — a pop/funk/dance-hall/whatever masterpiece produced by veteran reggae adventurers Sly & Robbie — *Rock Steady* finds Gwen Stefani saving the diva moves for video shoots and *Vogue* spreads. Instead, with virtuoso normalness, she leads her crack band through 13 songs that make it sound more fun to be in a smelly studio than anywhere on Earth.



Gwen Stefani: "F#&%in' moths!"



19 AIMEE MANN LOST IN SPACE SUPREMO

Eleven more songs for when you've just been dumped

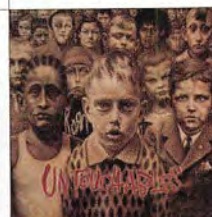
Dysfunctionally doomed romance her stock in trade, and elegantly crafted despair her way of coping, the Los Angeles-based Mann is Elvis Costello in elfin Darryl Hannah drag. "Nothing fuels a good flirtation," she sings with chilled poignancy in "The Moth," "like need and anger and desperation." As ever, a bull's-eye.



18 DESAPARECIDOS READ MUSIC/ SPEAK SPANISH SADDLE CREEK

Habla emo?

So about that horde of one-syllable-named bands who spent the year "saving" rock & roll — Desaparecidos beat them to the punch. Led by 22-year-old indie pinup Conor Oberst (the prodigious Oberst also fronts the chick-friendly emo-country big band Bright Eyes), this Omaha, Nebraska, five-piece wraps beautifully fuzzed-out guitars around youthful tantrums about love, loss — and too-strong coffee that gives you bad dreams.



17 KORN UNTOUCHABLES I!M!MORTAL/EPIC

Back in black

Heavy? Of course. But while the five previous Korn albums occasionally foundered on the rocks of inept hip-hop, *Untouchables* sees none-more-goth singer Jonathan Davis indulging his love of industrial music and new romanticism, with even the occasional flash of humor thrown in on "Wake Up Hate" and "Beat It Up Right." On their 1994 debut, California-bred Korn wrote the nü-metal rulebook. On *Untouchables*, you can hear them throw it out the window.

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THE 50 GREATEST ALBUMS OF 2002

The Vines enjoy a rare natural high.



16 THE VINES HIGHLY EVOLVED CAPITOL

Introducing the Australian Britpop Nirvana

London '66 or Seattle '91? Decisions, decisions. . . Youthful antipodeans the Vines opt for both with a grunge/Britpop gene-splice that sounds disastrous in theory but makes thrilling sense in practice, from their debut album's 93-second title track to the Kurt Cobain-channeling roar of the hit single "Get Free." And whether frontman Craig Nicholls is a bona fide rock loon or is just faking it, he puts on a fearsomely good show.

"It's Going to Be Extreme"

The Vines' **Craig Nicholls** on his band's next album and his year in weed

How are you, and where are you?
I'm good. I'm in London, watching TV.

Weren't the sessions for *Highly Evolved* rather fraught?
At the beginning we were nervous, and we were all smoking a lot of cigarettes. As soon as we'd finished the first few songs, it was like a great weight was lifted. Then we cut down on the smoking.

Are you "the best new band since Nirvana"?
That's a nice compliment. But it's a big thing to say. I don't want to force anything on anyone.



"This floor is really dirty."

What was the strangest thing that happened to you this year?
Flying on a plane.

That's it?
It just feels kind of strange to me.

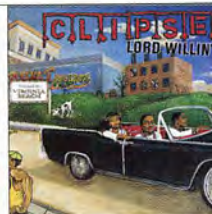
Villain of the year?
George W. Bush.

Sex symbol of the year?
That's a tough one. Madonna's getting older now. So Kylie Minogue, I guess. Or Britney.

What was the best weed you smoked this year?
This stuff I smoked yesterday was really great. I can't tell, because my memory's not too great, and the last batch always seems the best. But I'm pretty sure in this case it really is true.

How will you be spending New Year's Eve?
I'll be having an early night, because I plan to start recording our next album on New Year's Day.

Any hints about the next record?
Yeah. It's going to be really extreme.
CLARK COLLIS



15 CLIPSE LORD WILLIN' STAR TRAK/ARISTA

Neptunes protégés craft the hip-hop debut of 2002

The new Compton? According to this drug dealing-obsessed CD, the distinction goes to Clipse's hometown: Virginia Beach, Virginia. The flagship act on the Neptunes' Star Trak label, brothers Pusha T and Malice mix Dirty South hedonism with coked-up gangsta threats. The high points: the boastful "When the Last Time" and the chart-topping "Grindin'," a break-beat/electro rump-shaker that made the year's best case for a "retro rap" revival.



14 NORAH JONES COME AWAY WITH ME BLUE NOTE

Leftfield smash of the year!

It's the voice of Ravi Shankar's daughter that first hits home: a smoky, sultry instrument designed to render the lightest material the most intimate of invitations. On this debut — part Billie Holiday, part Dido — Jones's set list of classics, bandmates' originals (the hit "Don't Know Why") and her own sporadic song-writing makes for a beguiling whole, especially on the gorgeous title track. Bonus: may be a powerfully effective seduction aid.



13 STEVE EARLE JERUSALEM ARTEMIS

Not exactly mellowing with age

While infamous for "John Walker's Blues," about "American Taliban" John Walker Lindh, *Jerusalem* deserves equal attention for being Steve Earle's best (and most pissed-off) record since 1988's *Copperhead Road*. And if the country-rocker is even half-accurate about the utterly screwed-up social scenarios detailed in "Amerika v 6.0" or "The Truth" — with his visions of global warming and murderous HMOs — then God help us all.



12 QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE SONGS FOR THE DEAF INTERSCOPE

Don't fear the reefer

Throwing psychedelics, a dash of pop and Dave Grohl into the sonic bong, the third album from QOTSA's central partners, Josh Homme and Nick Oliveri, offers knockout riffs, Richter-scale drumming and affectionate classic-rock posturing that, well, rocks. If such tracks as "No One Knows" and the remorseless "Millionaire" merely sound like a bunch of guys having lots of fun, that's because that's precisely what they are.



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THE 50 GREATEST ALBUMS OF 2002

Scarface wins the Worst Yard Sale Ever award.



11 SCARFACE THE FIX DEF JAM SOUTH

Ex-Geto Boy gets warm and fuzzy about "crack-slinging" days

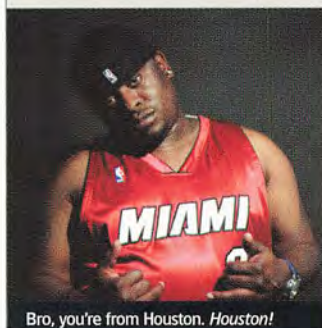
With a voice like sandpaper, veteran Houston rapper Scarface sounds pained whether he's pining for bygone days spent "pushing on the corner" or for fallen rappers like Tupac Shakur. On "Safe" and the piano-led lead single, "On My Block," he looks back with a strange fondness on the crack-plagued inner cities of the Reagan era, but the result is altogether uplifting, like hearing "The Message" for the first time all over again.

"I'm Doped Up Right Now!"

Remember, kids: Do as **Scarface** says, and not as he does. Er, wait, that's not right, either. . . .

How are you, and where are you?
I'm blessed, man. As for where I am, I'm here. [For the record, Mr. Face is in Yonkers, New York, on a video shoot.]

Rappers seem to line up to appear on your records.
Yeah, I'm honored to have Jay-Z and Nas and DMX willing to work with me. I've been around for a long fucking time. I'm having an LL Cool J, Dr. Dre career! And I'm from Texas, man! My shit was supposed to be two motherfucking albums and quit!



Bro, you're from Houston. Houston!

You're also CEO of Def Jam South. Do you have a big desk?
You know what? I hardly ever go to the office. I go there every now and then for meetings and viewing shit and kicking it. But I get most of my work done out here in the streets.

You had to cancel a tour in August because of high blood pressure. Are you feeling better now?
Much better, thank you. I'm just living one day at a time.

How would you rate your year?
I guess it could be better, but I'm alive, man. So that's a plus.

How many times did you vomit this year?
That's a hard one, 'cause I get fucked up! I take some strong-ass painkillers that get me nice and high, and I'll forget that I'm on that shit and end up drinking. I'm doped up right now!

How will you be spending New Year's Eve?
Wouldn't you like to know. . . .
CLARK COLLIS



10 TORI AMOS SCARLET'S WALK EPIC

The Greatest American Weirdo?

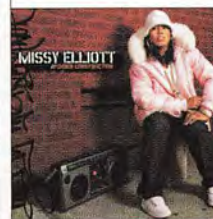
If your average songwriter attempted an American travelogue with a cast of characters ranging from a porn star to a doomed airplane passenger, your toes would curl in embarrassment — but Tori Amos isn't your average song-writer. She set out on a 50-state road trip and returned with her bravest and best album to date.



9 FAITH HILL CRY WARNER BROS. NASHVILLE

The anti-O Brother, Where Art Thou?

It looks good on paper: a sleek mix of *Dusty in Memphis*-style soul and Whitney-worthy showstoppers. But Faith Hill's fifth album sounds even better in practice. A squadron of Nashville's session elite backs up Hill on songs that invest everyday romance with Wagnerian drama, particularly the aria-like title track and "Baby You Belong," the most faultless devotional since Shania Twain's "Still the One."



8 MISSY ELLIOTT UNDER CONSTRUCTION ELEKTRA

Missy takes it backward on her fourth album

Faced with the deaths of friends Aaliyah and Lisa "Left Eye" Lopes, Missy Elliott and producer Timbaland forgo their usual futurist concoctions for some rap comfort food: a vintage Run-DMC sample here, an MC Lyte lyric there, and enough nonsense syllables ("Think you can handle this gadonka-donk-donk?") to thrill a preschooler. The result? The hip-hop equivalent of an Irish wake: a raucous party that honors the dead.



7 WILCO YANKEE HOTEL FOXTROT NONESUCH

Alt-country heroes turn disaster into triumph

Wilco's old label wasn't convinced (not "commercially viable," it griped), but Jeff Tweedy's musical adventurers have the last laugh with an album that prompted enthusiastic wags to dub them the American Radiohead. Sighing "I wonder why we listen to poets when nobody gives a fuck" one minute and wistfully reminiscing about Kiss the next, Tweedy delivers a record both sonically daring and achingly sad.

Hip-hop.  Hear it for the first time.



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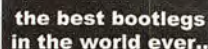
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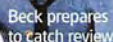
YOU'VE NEVER HEARD IT SO GOOD.



featuring: misery, nirvana, destiny's child, strokes, public enemy, christine aguilera, eminem, basement jaxx, cyrus dion, blake, dre, shogun, fatherly slim, sugarbabe, human league, & 12, tubeway army, the, depeche mode, clean, and many more...

The tears of a clown

Apparently, this downbeat but lovely record was inspired by the disintegration of Beck's long-term relationship with Leigh Limon. He's keeping mum about the details, but frankly, who cares? *Sea Change's* stark, unfaddish intensity is for anyone in the throes of heartbreak who needs a little catharsis, and "Lost Cause" and "Round the Bend" are so strong, they're uplifting. Almost.



Copyright-ducking fun!

Keep it hush-hush, but 2002's most exciting club sounds weren't strictly legal. Thanks to the Internet, the cheeky cut-and-paste approach dubbed "bastard pop" spread far and wide, and this compilation captured some of the best: Christina Aguilera canoodling with the Strokes, D12 mauling Depeche Mode, and Destiny's Child roughing it with Nirvana.

But after a number 1 album, Dixie Chick **Natalie Maines** has plenty to celebrate anyway!



It's where the heart is

Releasing a bluegrass album in 2002 may not be the revolutionary move it would have seemed a couple of years back, before *O Brother* swept the Grammys. But there's no doubt that few, if any, mainstream country artists could pull it off quite as brilliantly or convincingly as the Dixie Chicks do on their sixth album with "Long Time Gone," their twangy cover of Stevie Nicks's "Landslide" and the hilarious "White Trash Wedding."

How are you, and where are you?
I'm feeling good, and I'm in New York.

Home's opening track, "Long Time Gone," takes a few swipes at modern country music. Aren't you afraid of drive-by retaliations? Well, we figured it was OK to do that, because everyone thinks they're the exception — including us! Nobody thinks you're talking about them.

Were you worried people might think you were jumping on the *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* bandwagon with the bluegrass *Home*? We don't know who opened the doors for whom. People credit us for opening doors for *O Brother*, and *O Brother* gets credited for opening the doors for this sort of album.

How would you rate the year, on a scale of 1 to 10?
A 10!

If you could relive one day from this year over and over again, as in *Groundhog Day*, which one would you choose?

Probably the day we did the Country Music Television show *Crossroads* with James Taylor. He's my favorite musician and all-time inspiration, so it was really weird to hear him sing Dixie Chicks songs and to be on an equal playing field with him.

Do you have a favorite album of the year?
The new Neil Finn CD, *One All*.

Sex symbol of the year?
Shit. Well, I know it's not me — they just called me not hot in *Us Weekly*. There was "hot or not," and I got a "not." I'll say J.Lo. I think she's probably the sexiest woman out there.

How are you going to spend New Year's Eve this year?

We might have a party here in our apartment. Can you come?
Sure.
CLARK
COLLIS



A stake through the heart of teen pop

Who could have predicted that the pairing of a white R&B singer with the screechy voice behind the 1993 hit "What's Up?" would change pop music? Former 4 Non Blonde Linda Perry helps the former Alecia Moore orchestrate her leap from cookie-cutter club kid to completely compelling rock star and then some: The psychodrama of "Just Like a Pill" and "My Vietnam" pave the way for Avril, Michelle and dozens of girls-with-guitars to come.



Sensitive Britrockers make the leap to greatness

Oasis, Blur and Travis all failed to win America's heart, so what makes personable Brits Coldplay so different? A sophomore effort so gracefully epic it makes *Parachutes*, their 2000 debut, seem one-dimensional. They give U2 and Radiohead some arena-size competition, and, thanks to the spine-tingling weepie "The Scientist," they no doubt have soundtracked a few breakups. "Yellow"? What "Yellow"?

A large, dark, atmospheric image of Sam Fisher, the protagonist of Splinter Cell. He is wearing his signature black tactical suit and night vision goggles with glowing green lenses. He is holding a silenced pistol, and a green laser beam is visible in the background. The setting appears to be a dark, industrial environment with metal pipes and a chain-link fence.

He has the right equipment
to play this game. Do you?



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If you're Sam Fisher, a shadowy operative of the NSA in the highly-anticipated game, *Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell*, you'll need stealth disguises, cutting-edge espionage gadgetry...and the latest NVIDIA® GeForce™ graphics processor. Why? Because the stunning effects and intense action will bring you and your PC to its knees unless you arm yourself with the heavy fire power and industry-leading reliability of NVIDIA. So go ahead, dive into this covert world of high-tech warfare—but make sure you're properly equipped so you can play this game the way it's meant to be played.

Developed on NVIDIA. To be played on NVIDIA.



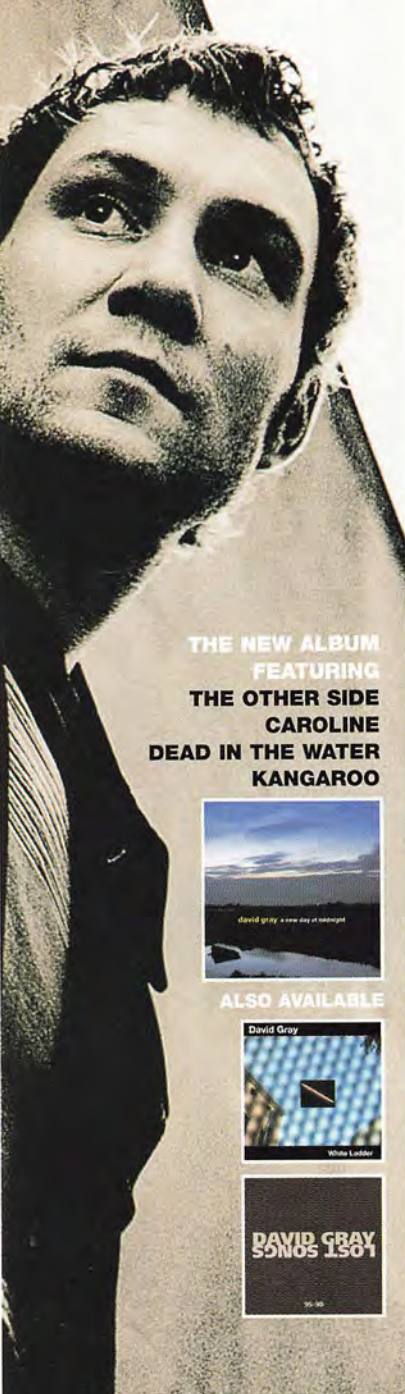
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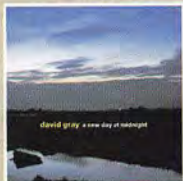


DAVID GRAY

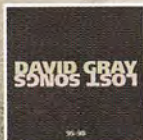
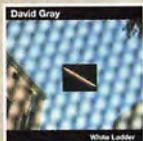
a new day at midnight



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THE 50 GREATEST ALBUMS OF 2002

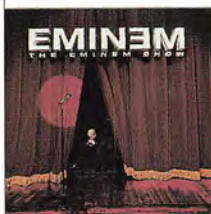
Eminem: always prepared for an unexpected gust of wind



THE GREATEST ALBUM OF 2002!

1 EMINEM THE EMINEM SHOW AFTERMATH/INTERSCOPE

The king of all media!



For his best album to date, the pathologically autobiographical rap star Marshall Mathers turns for inspiration to that other me-obsessed music form: nu-metal. What emerges is a rap-rock album of such spectacular clarity it's downright photographic, and of such punishing anger that Em's "Kill my wife... please" routine all but demands a restraining order. Adopting a grave tone usually reserved for deposed Roman emperors writing their memoirs, *The Eminem Show* plows through his daily diary from 1999 — when he seemed like a mere hip-hop comic — to the present, where he juggles lawsuits, child-rearing and polishing his Oscar speech. Brave and paranoid, obsessed and aloof, grand and playful, proud and regretful and chock-full of great singles — "Without Me," of course, but "Cleaning Out My Closet" and the Aerosmith-sampling "Sing for the Moment" as well — this is exactly what you had hoped for from the most fascinating artist since that other ambitious blonde, Madonna.

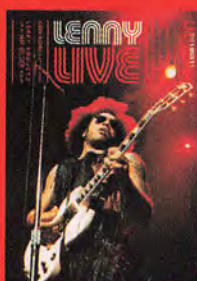
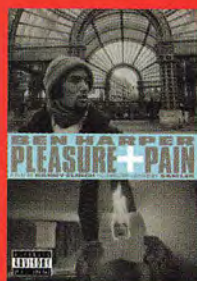


HOW WE DID IT

The 50 Greatest Albums of 2002 were chosen by the *Blender* editorial staff, some of whom are still not speaking to one another as a result.

If you, like a certain misguided magazine employee, believe that the Black Crowes' live album should have been included in the Top 10 — or have any other problems with the list — please write to us at *Blender*, 1040 Avenue of the Americas, 22nd floor, New York, New York 10018, or e-mail us at your2cents@blender.com.

YOUR EARS MAY GET JEALOUS OF YOUR EYES



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THE SMASHING PUMPKINS
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THE SMASHING PUMPKINS
EARPHORIA LIVE DVD
Includes live performances of classic Smashing Pumpkins songs and features studio footage from the making of *Siamese Dream*, plus almost an hour of bonus concert footage - "The Last Tapes '94".

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XXXTINA

Just three years ago, **Christina Aguilera** was a demure teen pop star singing about genies in bottles. Then came the nipple piercings. And the racy outfits. And now, a new album that reveals her to be darker, edgier and *dirrtier* than anyone would ever have thought possible. So is the star who recently suffered a "breakdown," like, OK? "Obviously not."

BY WILLIAM SHAW
PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANK OCKENFELS 3





"Brush teeth,
check. Wash face,
check. Sit on sink
and weigh breasts
... check!"

PANTIES FROM RETAIL SLUT, L.A.



CHRISTINA AGUILERA finally emerges from the makeup trailer, teetering in heels and a thong.

She looks kind of scary.

Above a single piercing, her lips are painted black. Deep, dark eye shadow surrounds each doe-like eye.

By no stretch of the imagination is this the playful, bright-eyed, bare-midriffed teen who sang "Genie in a Bottle," that incomparable anthem to nascent teen sexuality. This is no perky teen dream. This is Xtina, as she styles herself — and the name is tattooed on the back of her neck.

This Christina lounges on a sofa for the *Blender* photo shoot, legs splayed wide, unself-consciously flashing her nipple ring as she fastidiously arranges her breasts in her bra. The vice president of publicity for Aguilera's record label peers in nervously, worried what these torrid poses will mean for Aguilera's image. Sexy and striking, she is dressed like a hooker from the Sci-Fi Channel. And the dress code for today's photo shoot comes largely from Xtina. "She's been waiting to do a shoot like this her whole life," an attendant whispers.

This is another step in Xtina's campaign to wipe fluffy-sweatered, Christmas-album Christina from our collective memories. The thought of teen Christina makes her cringe, she says.

"It wasn't completely conservative," she declares of her former image. "To a lot of people, a virginal little pop star showing her navel was shocking. Not that I ever said I was a virgin," she cackles, unable to resist a sideswipe at Britney Spears.

People wouldn't expect the old Christina to have a pierced nipple, maybe.

"No . . ."

Was that painful?

"The clamp was. I've had it done three times. I had both of them at first. I took the piercings out for a while, and then I had the right one done again. I don't know. Obviously I like it." There have been rumors that she has had her breasts augmented, and the *New York Post* hinted recently that Aguilera has had her nether regions pierced as well; she admits only to a total of 11 piercings. "Uh, I'm running out of places," she says with deliberate vagueness, then laughs.

So which was the most painful?

Again she bursts into loud laughter. "Mmm," she says. "Probably . . . ah . . . [long pause] the nipple." She explains that she acquired most of her metalwork on tour. "It was a lack of being able to

express myself in other ways," she says. "A way of letting aggression or anger out in other ways."

What — like, "I'm depressed. Let's get pierced!"

"Exactly. That's why I have so many, I guess."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

THINK BACK three long years ago, to 1999. Tech stocks were booming, *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* monopolized prime time, and teen pop — shiny, toothsome and oh-so-chaste — was dominant.

If any fact seemed to sum up the monopoly on chart wholesomeness pop held, it was that three of that year's biggest stars — Justin Timberlake of 'N



Christina and "friend," 1999; inset, at 2000 Grammys

"If I had to make another record like the last one, I'd quit the business."

★

Sync, Spears and Aguilera — had been child stars together on the Disney Channel's *Mickey Mouse Club*. They formed a perfect pop triangle: Spears was the cute virgin queen of pop, dating Timberlake and begging you to hit her one more time. From the start, Aguilera was cast as Spears's archrival — and marketed as the one who would ultimately achieve greater long-term success, because — *bitch, bitch* — she could *really* sing.

The Staten Island, New York-born Aguilera was always presented as the pearl among swine. When she debuted, Ron Fair, at the time the senior vice president of A&R at RCA, said he had always dreamed of signing a "one-name act" like Barbra, Judy, Janet or Madonna. Christina, he boasted to the press, would be the one. Such image-crafting helped

her walk off with the Best New Artist trophy at the 1999 Grammys.

But teen stars grow up. The Xtina who is releasing *Stripped* is clearly embarrassed about what made her famous. "If I had to make another record like that last one," she says, "I would quit the business." Remember, Christina Aguilera has sold more than 8 million copies.

It's natural for any 21-year-old to hate facing the consequences of things she did at 18. But for Aguilera, that hatred runs deeper than simple embarrassment. She wants to obliterate everything she stood for three years ago and start over.

A hint of this came with her appearance in last year's award-winning "Lady Marmalade" video alongside Mya, Pink and Lil' Kim, in which she strutted her stuff dressed as a fin-de-siècle Parisian streetwalker. In a sure sign of things to come, Aguilera says that of the "Lady Marmalade" quartet, it was Lil' Kim to whom she felt, and still feels, closest. The success of the song also served to keep her career momentum going while she agonized over her sophomore album.

But not all her attempts to distance herself from her neatly buffed pop image have been as successful. Her award-show getups have been roundly jeered by the fashion police, and her microskirted appearance at this year's MTV Video Music Awards seemed only to betray a desperate attempt to erase all traces of teen-pop Christina from public memory.

Now she's releasing *Stripped*. As we're learning to expect, she's no longer the girl who grew up wanting to be Julie Andrews. The word she uses most to describe where she is now is *edgy*. "I'm showing the darker, edgier side of me," she says. She has just finished the photo shoot. In keeping with the new, sexually aggressive Xtina, it featured a topless photo — her first ever — with her blond extensions draped to hide her nipples.

"This is definitely my introduction," she says. "I knew it would be kind of hard, because everyone is used to seeing me as the 'Genie in a Bottle,' 'What a Girl Wants,' whatever. The friggin' 'Come on Over' girl — that is so anti-me." She recites the litany of her former hits with rising indignation, as though they were rocks she has to drag around with her.

Which makes you wonder why the new Xtina hates the old Christina so much.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

IT'S THE DAY after the photo shoot. Aguilera awoke at 1 P.M. That's not unusual. The shoot went into the small hours of the morning, but she's a night person anyway, preferring to sleep →



"Now where
did I put that
safety pin?"

through the daylight hours. She's always been afraid of the dark and is still sometimes plagued by nightmares. "To this day," she says, "I can't be in a dark room by myself, or sleep at night in the dark without some kind of light on — or my dogs with me. It's a fear of mine. I know it's a very childish thing."

She's sitting in the meeting room of her manager's office in the Los Angeles neighborhood of Westwood, her legs up on a chair. She's dressed in baggy pants, a pale bandanna and a thin white tank top that does little to hide the silver nipple ring beneath it.

"This record," she announces, "has been really tough for me to do. There were a lot of personal battles."

The last two years have certainly been a bumpy ride. It started in 2000 when Aguilera ditched Steve Kurtz, her once-trusted manager. He was the one who spotted her at age 15, and who had represented her ever since. Initially, she claimed that his frantic work schedule had exhausted her, leaving no time to develop her talent. That October she went further, suing Kurtz for fraud, breach of fiduciary duty and exercising "improper, undue and inappropriate influence" over her professional career. (Kurtz filed a countersuit claiming breach of contract. The case has yet to be resolved.)

She was involved in legal action again last year when she tried — and failed — to stop two producers who had taped demos with her when she was 14 and 15 from releasing the recordings under the title *Just Be Free*.

Meanwhile, her long-term relationship with her former dancer Jorge Santos was falling apart. She had spent her teenage years focused on her career, and Santos was her first big romance.

"What sucks," she says, "is I always try and go for the guys who don't want to be in the spotlight — who can't deal with the pressure of dating someone like me. They're not as far ahead with their careers and life as they want to be," she says, "and so they feel inadequate."

The pair had shared a home in L.A.; theirs had been an intense relationship. Like her Irish mother, she had fallen for a Latino. The song "Infatuation," which survived the breakup and made it onto *Stripped*, hints at how strongly Aguilera felt about Santos before their split: "Mama used to warn me about those Latin lovers. Said, 'I gave my heart too soon/And that's how I became your mother.'"

Neither her love life nor the prospects for a second album were helped by what happened next. Aguilera began working with a man she refers to — with some bitterness — as "that producer." Their



"Who you calling a Mickey Mouse outfit?": With fellow Mouseketeers Justin Timberlake (top right) and Britney Spears (bottom right), 1992

working partnership developed into what she calls a "personal relationship" that turned sour. "I went through a crazy first love and breakup, then got involved with a certain producer who didn't get any tracks on the record," she says with a mocking laugh. "That was my first experience with a player. I learned the hard way that people will say anything to get with you. I was played for, like, seven months by this dude."

She refuses, point-blank, to divulge his name. "You figure it out," she says. "But maybe if he would have spent more time trying to make a record rather than trying to . . ." She pauses, then adds, darkly, "He's got a bit of a reputation for trying to get with the girls he makes records with."

"I always go for guys who can't deal with the pressure of dating someone like me."



With DIY piercing kit in the "Genie in a Bottle" video



↑ "If you think I'm sexy/You should be arrested. . . .": On *Star Search*, 1989

"That's the point where I just broke down. My mom flew out and stayed with me for a while. It was really, really hard."

She remembers going crazy one night at one of the after-hours parties she hosts at her home, bawling out a friend who was smoking a cigarette and then storming out of the house at 3 A.M., crying and slamming the door behind her. She ran and ran up the street. People came up to her while she was crying, and she simply told them to go away.

"I felt like I was nutty," she says. "I didn't want anyone to get close to me. I had put an imaginary box around me. I would literally scoot away from a person. It was bad, bad, bad."



IN THE PAST two years, Aguilera has found herself suing the people she once trusted, and feeling betrayed in her personal relationships. That's one reason for the new album's edginess.

Stripped was put together during those two turbulent years — Aguilera wrote almost all the lyrics with a succession of producers and cowriters, including sometime Eminem producer Scott Storch and Glen Ballard, who has produced Alanis Morissette and Dave Matthews. Other collaborators who made the final cut include Lil' Kim, Dave Navarro and Alicia Keys.

The album veers from exuberant diva disco (the Storch-produced "Can't Hold Us Down") to the '70s guitar wig-out "Make Over," a live-wire rant (featuring ex-4 Non Blonde and Pink collaborator Linda Perry) against those in the business who tried to mold her image, to Perry's aching four-chord ballad "Beautiful," the only song Aguilera didn't cowrite.

No matter who's manning the production console, though, the theme running through *Stripped* stays the same: Aguilera raising a middle finger at the people who she feels have mistreated her, manipulated her, betrayed her or dissed her.

We're impressed with the level of pure rage on *Stripped*. Do you ever have a →

Christina's first day
working as a
chambermaid would
also be her last.



HANDCLIFFS FROM
RETAIL SLUT, L.A. BRA,
CORSET, GARTER AND
PANTIES BY AGENT
PROVOCATEUR
NECKLACE BY CHROME
HEARTS

★ CHRISTINA AGUILERA

problem managing your anger in public?

"You know what? I've been taking kickboxing lessons. I've gotten to the place in a club where I'm ready to go there. I don't think I'd be timid."

Stripped reaches its most heart-felt moment on "I'm OK," which she cowrote with Perry. It's not necessarily the CD's best song, but it's the one that gives the clearest insight into why *Stripped* is like it is. And why Aguilera is like she is.

"I'm OK" is about her father, Fausto Aguilera, an Ecuadorian-American U.S. Army sergeant, the man to whom her mother gave her heart away too soon, as the lyric from "Infatuation" tells it. The song is also about the abuse he dealt out to her and her mother before they left him, when Christina was 5.

The song is guilelessly graphic, depicting Aguilera's life with her father on an army base in Japan. Scenes she had long forgotten surfaced in the writing: a memory of her father knocking her against a cold staircase; the sight of her mother with red bruises around her neck from where he had apparently half-

throttled her. "You know," she says, "writing it was really, really hard."

Perry encouraged her to let all the memories spill out. As Aguilera sings, you can hear her crying.

At one point during recording, she balked. "It's too much. I can't do it," she said through tears.

Perry, who has become something of a guru to confessional female song-

No, we don't know where she keeps her car keys, either.

CAPELET BY ROLAND MOURET FROM PRESS, L.A.; PANTIES BY AGENT PROVOCATEUR



↑ "How come Pink always gets to wear the top hat?" Aguilera (right) with the Ladies Marmalade, 2001

writers, cajoled Aguilera to finish recording: "It's a good place to be," she told her. "Just do it."

Aguilera isn't sure what her father will make of the song. In the past, he has publicly denied abusing his wife and daughter. "But as I sing 'For you it's a memory, but for me . . .'" Aguilera says, grimacing, "you know — it's still there."

For years, she has had little contact with her father. She says she's not even sure he knows the song will be coming out. "He'll know pretty soon," she says, laughing abruptly.

The way you sing "I'm OK," it sounds more like a question than an assertion.

"Absolutely. It sounds like it could be uplifting, but the real question is, 'Am I OK?'" Her mouth scrunches up for a second. "Obviously not, if I'm still freakin' crying about it."

★★★★★

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS FIND Christina Aguilera at the Lounge, a club on Santa Monica Boulevard in West Hollywood. There she sits in a booth surrounded by her regular entourage: young dancers, actors, a makeup artist. She doesn't dance. She watches.

She sits in the middle of the bench in a position that makes it just about impossible for her to move, sipping her drink while people mill around her. One friend calls her Nurse Betty because of how she nurses a glass for two hours while ordering more for everyone else.

"I like everyone to have a good time," she protests.

Tonight, she is cradling a green drink in a tall glass. "What is it? I don't know."

"It's a Midori sour," a friend tells her. "Oh."

She likes to drink, but only as much as the next person, she says. At the moment, she's into mojitos. When she met Alicia Keys at New York's Mercer Hotel to discuss their *Stripped* collaboration, the two singers christened their new-found relationship with them. With Perry, she drank tequila shots. Sometimes she likes a nice cold beer. →

Pop Quiz!

Decisions, decisions: Christina Aguilera makes 16 of them!

Straight up or on the rocks?

Neither — a margarita blended, or liquor with a mixer on the rocks.

Circumcised or un-?

Ewww — circumcised!

Eminem or Triumph, the Insult Comic Dog?
Eminem.

Dawn or dusk?

Dusk.

My way or the highway?

My way, of course.

The Hives or the Vines?

Undecided.

Shaq or Kobe?

Shaq.

Us Weekly or People?

Hate 'em both — mindless tabloids.

Ross or Joey?

Don't watch *Friends*; don't care.

Truth or dare?

Dare.

Uppers or downers?

Uppers.

Ben Affleck or Matt Damon?

Neither.

"Free Bird" or "Stairway to Heaven"?

"Stairway to Heaven."

Chris Rock or Chris Tucker?

Both.

Wink, wink or nudge, nudge?

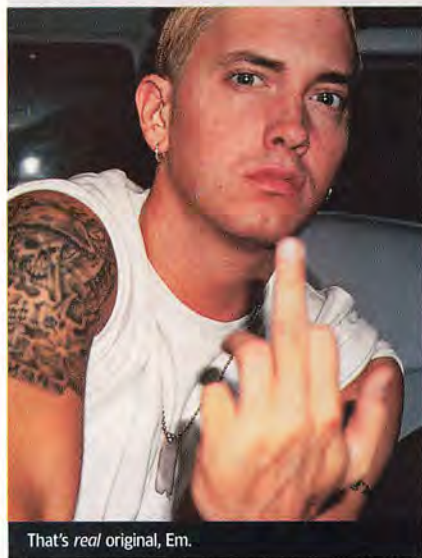
Straight to the point — nudge, nudge.

Your place or mine?

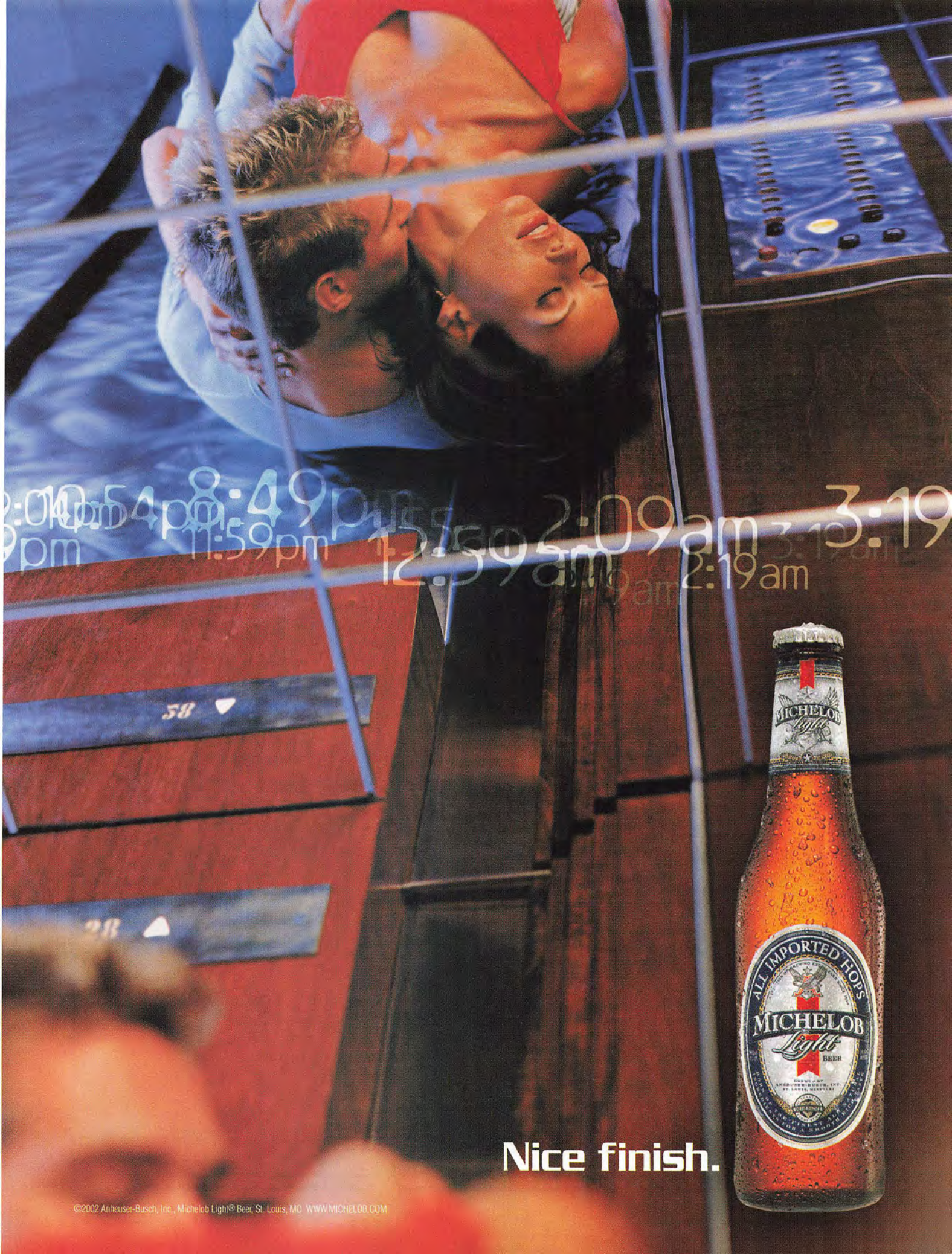
Mine . . . if you're lucky.



A Hive: live!



That's real/ original, Em.



10:04pm 10:54pm 8:49pm 11:59pm 12:59am 2:09am 3:19am
9pm 11:59pm 12:59am 2:09am 2:19am 3:19am



Nice finish.

"I'm not a big drug person. I'm really not," she says. "I don't like being completely out of control in my situation. I like drinking. It takes the edge off."

Her friends have been scrawling on the linen tablecloth in front of her. Someone has written *YOU SMELL*. A couple of inches away, others have been playing hangman: *P E N I S*.

Her fellow former Mouseketeer Justin Timberlake is holding court two booths away. He comes over to say hello, politely leaning over the table to talk to her. It's one of those very modern Hollywood moments. Dressed in a number 27 basketball jersey, J.Lo's ex-husband Cris Judd comes to pay his respects as well.

Aguilera sits, taking it all in, watching the crowd carefully, taking tiny sips from her Midori sour.

Boyfriend rumors. One: Tobey Maguire.
"Ahh! Really?"

Read it in the papers. It must be true.

"Tobey's just one of the people I've gotten to know and be really cool with. That's funny."

Two: Robbie Williams.

She shakes her head vigorously. "He's cool, but he never even says hi to me when we're working at the same studio!"

Three: Dave Navarro.

"Oh, no! Him and Carmen [Electra] — I'm not going to touch that." She bursts out laughing. "I'm a big fan of his. I've always respected him as a guitarist."

What was the last great party you attended?

"I don't know. Here in L.A., damn — I haven't been to a great party in a while." *Is that for lack of trying?*



When hitchhiking, Christina rarely has to wait long for a lift.

"I don't really like happy music. There's a comfort to me in pain."



"I don't think there have been really great parties. The last party I went to was Tobey's party. Which was pretty cool."

That's Tobey Maguire, your lover?

She laughs. "According to the press . . . schmess."

The Lounge crowd moves obediently toward the exit. Aguilera hates that clubs in Los Angeles close at 2 A.M. She's never ready to go to bed by then. Often she invites her club friends, new and old, back to her place and stays awake until morning. She hates to be alone at night, yet it's the time she comes alive.



With Mom backstage at TRL, 1999

"It's a double-edged thing," she says. "I'm afraid of the night, but I feel a comfort in it."

It's easy to understand why Aguilera tries so hard to get her audience to look at her, to see her as something other than the sweet, confident, beguiling girl

who sang "Genie in a Bottle."

She never felt like that girl, she says. The real Christina was someone who was afraid of the dark, who remembered lying awake scared in her bedroom in the Tokyo apartment before her mother and father split.

"I was really afraid all the time," she remembers. "Growing up like that, you never know what's going to happen. Being afraid to go home."

Perhaps it's no wonder she wants to destroy everything her first album represented, all with her raggedy hair extensions, her pin-cushion piercings and her often deliberately unpretty sexuality.

With *Stripped*, she has achieved what she set out to do.

"I like darker music — I don't really like happy music a lot," she concludes. "There's a comfort to me in pain." [BLENDER]



"Yo, 'Tina! Medusa would like her snakes back!"

You're Not Going Out Dressed Like That!

Or, at least, you shouldn't have. *Blender* presents a brief history of Christina's peculiar style selections



In denim: Good God!



In stretch velvet: What the . . . ?



In a carpet: Holy crap!



In a corset: Hey, that's not so bad.

SHE PRESSED AGAINST HIM
HE COULD NOT RESIST HER NEEDS
HE WOULD DIE FOR HER



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PlayStation 2



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Strong Language
Violence



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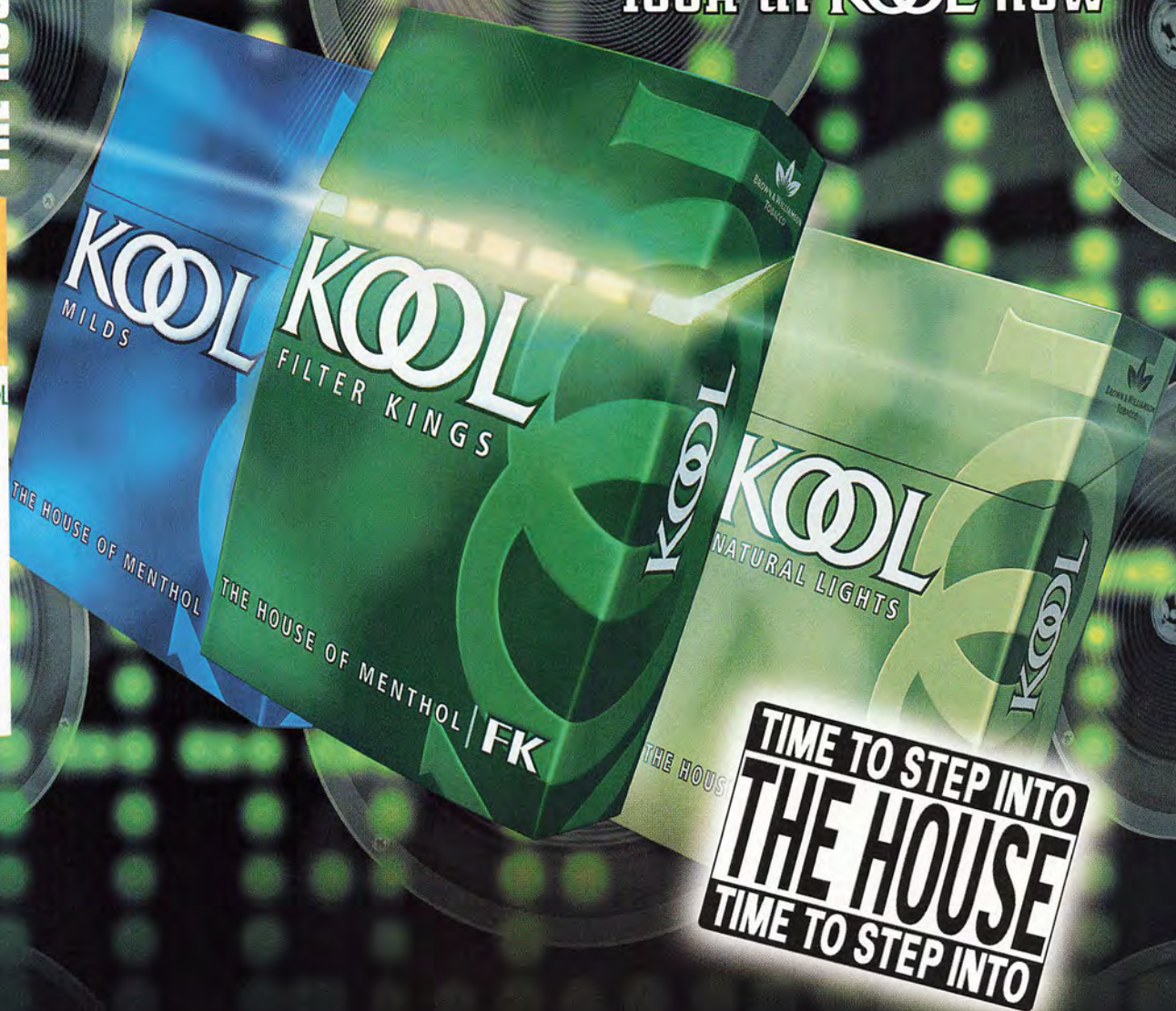
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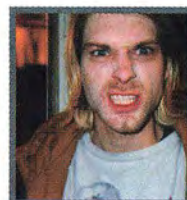
Natural Lights Kings Box, 7 mg. "tar", 0.7 mg. nicotine; Milds Box, 11 mg. "tar", 1.0 mg. nicotine; Box Kings, 16 mg. "tar", 1.2 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method. Actual deliveries will vary based on how you hold and smoke your cigarette. For more product information, visit our website at www.bw.com



136
AUDIOSLAVE
Rage and Soundgarden
finally mate on CD
☆☆☆



163
BOB DYLAN
His famous 1975 whiteface
tour, on CD for the first time
☆☆☆☆



160
NIRVANA
The greatest-hits collection
is here at last!
★★★★★

The Guide

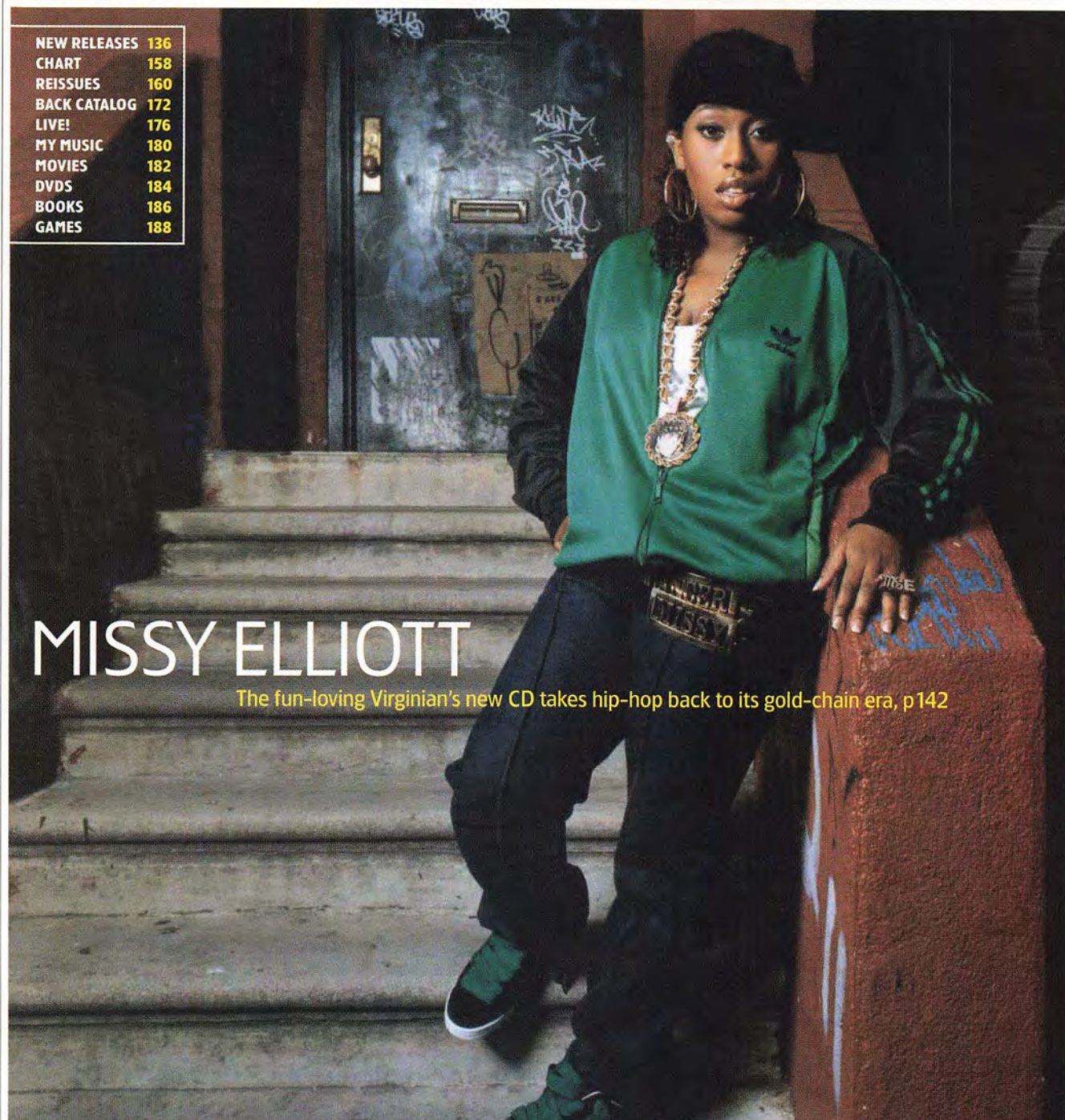


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MISSY ELLIOTT

The fun-loving Virginian's new CD takes hip-hop back to its gold-chain era, p142



Rage No More

Rage Against the Machine and Soundgarden's Chris Cornell unite — and make shockingly feel-good music



THERE'S SOMETHING sweetly romantic about Audioslave, the second-marriage union of two hard-rock dynasties. They're like *The Brady Bunch*, with rock stars in the place of Carol, Mike and the kids.

Here's the story: Guitarist Tom Morello and his mates in Rage Against the Machine, the leftist Los Angeles foursome that made rap-rock more than just a joke, found themselves without a singer when Zack de la Rocha got sick of guitars and departed in 2000. Chris Cornell, the golden throat of Seattle's art-metal heroes Soundgarden, had been solo since tedium cracked his group in 1997, and he needed a new flame. The new superband's first

AUDIO-SLAVE

☆☆☆

EPIC

experiments resulted in smoking demos and a group name, Civilian, but a rift developed: "Chris hates the band, the band hates Chris," one insider told *Blender* at the time.

In March, just days after Civilian were announced as an Ozzfest headliner, they broke up. But lots of bands persevere despite mutual hatred, and by September, they had remedied their conflicts. Given all the rancor, it's a shock to hear the newly named Audioslave's feel-good twist on muscular classic rock. In a strange way, it's very calm music.

Some listeners will be disappointed in Audioslave's lack of artistic leaps. After all, these bands modernized metal in the 1990s. Soundgarden found the balance between abstract art rock and bone-crunching mayhem; Rage, meanwhile, absorbed hip-hop as more than a pose, with Morello scratching like a DJ on his Telecaster. With rap-rock gone all mushy, this supergroup might be expected to storm in with some new prototypes.

But Audioslave aren't about crashing through barriers. In a strange way, they're four gifted, experienced players enjoying one another's talents. This project sounds more like the introverted side of Soundgarden than like Rage's radical calls for revolution. Hip-hop has absolutely no presence here, and the lyrics invoke interior landscapes, leaving politics aside. What could have made Morello, the fiercest Marxist ever to play a sports arena, put down his red flag and strum lovely chord progressions while Cornell croons dreamily about "lost highways" and "cobweb afternoons"?

One word: *variety*. More than anything, Audioslave is a duet between a guitarist stretching his fingers and a singer eager to ride his vocal range. "Cochise," the album's first track and barnstorming single, starts with a typically Rage-ful guitar storm supported by

Audioslave Their greatest CDs →

RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

EPIC, 1992

☆☆☆☆

Rap-rock springs fully formed from the grooves of this triple-platinum debut, as Rage perfect the genre at its birth. The "Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me" chant in "Killing in the Name" helps them win a showcase slot on Lollapalooza.

EVIL EMPIRE

EPIC, 1996

☆☆☆☆

Enduring intraband wars, Rage break through to MTV, via "Bulls on Parade" and "People of the Sun." Stirring, though Zack de la Rocha's militant yelping can induce a Marxist headache.

THE BATTLE OF LOS ANGELES

EPIC, 1999

☆☆☆☆

Tight as a tank lid, focused as a rifle scope, it debuts at number 1, and helps inspire World Trade Organization protests. Rage call the disc "the weapon of sound above ground"; internal conflicts lead to a band split one year later.



SOUNDGARDEN

ULTRAMEGA OK

SST, 1988

☆☆☆☆

Grunge is young and hung, Kim Thayil is its guitar god and Chris Cornell its baby Adonis when this comes out in the long-haired late '80s. Not every moment is brilliant, but it sure is loud.



BADMOTORFINGER

A&M, 1991

☆☆☆☆

Cornell strikes the perfect Jesus Christ pose on this sonic wallop, which so impresses Axl Rose that he invites Soundgarden to open for Guns N' Roses on their 1992 tour. Still, Pearl Jam and Nirvana upstage Soundgarden as the kings of Seattle rock.

SUPERUNKNOWN

A&M, 1994

☆☆☆☆

Cornell's fixation with the Beatles pays off with the hit single "Black Hole Sun," and guitarist Thayil helps create the stoner-rock template on this 5 million-selling breakthrough, which tops the pop charts, wins two Grammy Awards and stands as Soundgarden's masterpiece.

ANN POWERS



Audioslave, from left: Brad Wilk, Chris Cornell, Tim Commerford, Tom Morello

Brad Wilk's big bass drum, as Cornell's rough, high-range vocals nod to Hurricane Zack. Track two, "Show Me How to Live," is 1970s metal with 1990s washboard abs, but by the next song, Cornell's doing his *Sgt. Pepper's* voice-box trick, leading the band toward the pastures of '60s psychedelia.

From then on, the band revels in melodic counterpoint, with Cornell's voice the springboard for Morello's precision riffing. "What You Are" starts out as a power



ballad, though it soon gets heavy; “I Am the Highway” begins soft and cool, and it stays there. “Like a Stone” even indicates that Morello might be listening to Coldplay — he uses his effects pedals to get positively shimmery.

This is feel-good stuff, the sound of a rejuvenating artistic vacation. Cornell is in excellent voice, continually building his sense of dynamics; his lyrics may not be the freshest throughout (get off that “dark sun” metaphor, already!), but

it’s always a pleasure to hear him roar, especially now that it’s only part of his repertoire. His self-discipline causes Morello to think before he rolls out the effects, and that sonic conservatism confines the rhythm section a bit — Wilk and bassist Tim Commerford assert themselves most on “Hypnotize” and other Rage-like rampages. Rage’s sound was furiously new, despite being made of recycled materials. Audioslave don’t crash through walls that way.

**Audioslave’s
music is
1970s
metal with
1990s
washboard
abs.**

Audioslave probably won’t be a long-term commitment; Morello’s too much of an activist to let this collaboration keep him off the streets forever. And Cornell, an aesthete to the bone, isn’t the type to join any serious political battles. When the Rage boys decide the world needs more anthems, Cornell may kiss the band goodbye.

But even if Audioslave prove just a fleeting romance, hard rock’s Big Thinkers have made a very sweet love child. *ANN POWERS*

3 DOORS DOWN

AWAY FROM THE SUN ★★

UNIVERSAL

Second album from improbably popular, amazingly dull neogrunge rockers

The hit "Kryptonite," off 3 Doors Down's 2000 album, *The Better Life*, established the Mississippi quartet alongside Creed, Matchbox Twenty and Collective Soul as the standard-bearers of Southern rock, twenty-first-century style — tidy grunge with a light drawl. Frontman Brad Arnold, who plays drums in the studio but not live, doesn't

trifle with the formula that has culled multiplatinum sales. All choruses swell in the expected places, and the general sense of discontent on which rock radio thrives is accounted for. But "When I'm Gone," *Away From the Sun*'s lead single, lacks the goofy charm of "Kryptonite." Clearly, no one has sat them down for the old "You're sure you want to be the dreariest band on Earth?" speech.

ROB KEMP

BEATNUTS

THE ORIGINATORS ★★★

LANDSPEED

Hip-hop's Latin kings of schwing start strong, but can't finish

As revered hip-hop producers, the Beatnuts have supplied well-crafted tracks for Ghostface Killah, Fat Joe and Mos Def. But as rappers, 'Nuts Juju and Psycho Les are hell-raising hedonists epitomized by the unforgettable mantra "I wanna fuck, drink beer and smoke some shit," from *Intoxicated Demons*, their brilliant 1994 debut EP. Predictably, their uneven fifth album scores when their musical alter egos merge, resulting in the salacious stripper homage "Work That Pole," the jubilant, Scarface-inspired "Yae Yo," and the irresistible, accordion-tinged "Buying Out the Bar." But when the



3 Doors Down, working hard on another hit record

'Nuts forsake the loopy allure of their proven pleasure principles for generic boasts (primarily on the album's forgettable second half), they're chasing the wrong kind of trouble.

CHAIRMAN MAO

BOSTON

CORPORATE AMERICA ★★

ARTEMIS

The original creators of corporate rock rage against corporations. Hypocrites!

For their fifth full album in 26 years, Boston get a little middle-aged crazy, augmenting their usual obsessively crafted prog-rock love songs with a

shocking dose of political content: It's like hearing the office computer nerd rage against Middle East policy. "Corporate America," the Big Issue Song, uses '80s synth-pop riffs to accuse '90s Big Business of fouling the environment and the economy. Elsewhere, "Cryin'" (written by newcomer Anthony Cosmo and sung by his dad, Boston vet Fran Cosmo) marries an ersatz Oasis melody to Jewel-like poetry, while "With You" (the first Boston song ever sung by a woman) turns them into a loud-but-sensitive coffeehouse band. Naturally, it's all well-played and carefully recorded, but the big-riff pleasure of "More Than a Feeling" and "Don't Look Back" is missing amidst all the granola rock.

J.D. CONSIDINE

TRACY CHAPMAN

LET IT RAIN ★★

ELEKTRA

For her sixth album, the bard of P.C. trades her fast car for a Yugo with no air conditioning

Unlike 2000's *Telling Stories*, too much about Tracy Chapman's *Let It Rain* is austere — there's only a modicum of melody as the singer-songwriter's voice looms loud against spare, drum-heavy musical conceits. The starkness surely

THE SCORE >>

★★★★★

EXCELLENT. A MUST-HAVE

★★★★

GREAT. CHECK IT OUT

★★★

VERY GOOD IN ITS GENRE

★★

JUST OK

★

WEAK

BAD GIRRL

What a girl wants, apparently, is to be verry, verry dirty

CHRISTINA AGUILERA

STRIPPED ★★★

RCA

>>> CONCERNED PARENTS and teen boys with their tongues hanging out have their skank meters trained on Christina Aguilera. The girl's got a long reputation, based on her short skirts and the sleaziness of her video for the Rockwilder-produced, Redman-flavored single "Dirrty." Chaps with a bikini is a bit outré, but get this straight: Throughout *Stripped*, Aguilera stands up as a better role model than Britney Spears has ever tried to be.

Self-respect, physical independence and emotional confidence rank high in this collection of hip-hop throw-downs and Celine Dion-style torchers. Most admirable is Aguilera's embrace of sexual pleasure. It's a message girls need to hear: They can enjoy their bodies without destroying themselves.

Similarly, the musical peaks are shows of strength, setting Aguilera's supercharged wail in Technicolor arrangements. Hip-hop vet Scott Storch grasps Aguilera's gift for melodrama:

"Fighter" reworks En Vogue's "Free Your Mind" as a survivor's tale, with Dave Navarro on guitar. "Can't Hold Us Down," a smug slap at enemies Eminem and Fred Durst, benefits from a wicked Lil' Kim rap. And "Loving Me 4 Me" softens Aguilera's edge as she dots a light jazz arrangement with Donna Summer-worthy oohs and aahs.

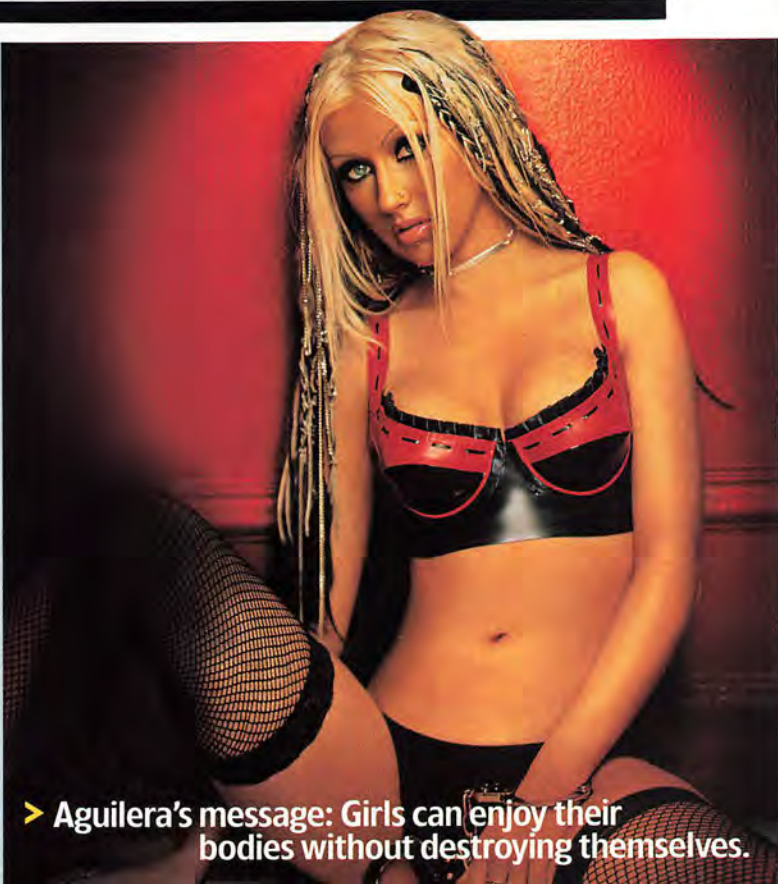
Aguilera cowrote most of the songs, and she sounds surer of her themes than Spears did in a similar I'm-coming-out role last year. She rails against beauty standards, denounces her violent father and, in an Oprah moment, advises girls to follow "the voice within." She whoops and wanders through every melody, never turning the volume below 5, derailing collaborations with old pros Linda Perry and Glen Ballard.

Brazenness is Aguilera's best quality. But it can make people hate her, as it has with many a bad girl. ANN POWERS

CHRISTINA AGUILERA'S CURRENT LISTENING

>>> BOB MARLEY
UPRISING TUFF GONG

>>> PEACHES
THE TEACHES OF PEACHES XL/BEGGARS GROUP



> Aguilera's message: Girls can enjoy their bodies without destroying themselves.



traces to producer John Parish, a Polly Harvey collaborator, but it doesn't explain why Chapman's lyrics accomplish so much less than her best songs, in the *I'm very depressed* and *People say you're no good but I like you* vein. And the token social commentary on "Hard Wired" (about media manipulation) is clumsy and obvious. Right at the end, with a trio of moving songs, the arrangements billow slightly to accommodate full-fledged tunes — but they're not good enough to redeem this bland album.

MICHAEL AZERRAD

CODY CHESNUTT

THE HEADPHONE MASTERPIECE ★★★★★

READY, SET, GO!

Hip-hop attitude explodes into a bedroom concept album for a brazen singer

The Great Expectations Award for deafening underground buzz of the year goes to rock & souler Cody Chesnutt (né Antonious Thomas). He's the 33-year-old West Coast transplant from Atlanta with the *cojones* to debut with a 36-song double album, reject all label offers in order to release the record independently and name the CD *The Headphone Masterpiece*. Flaunting an intentionally rough-around-the-edges demo quality, the multi-instrumentalist blends the flightiness of De La Soul's *3 Feet High and Rising* ("Magic in a Mortal Minute," like other tracks, clocks in at under two minutes) with the horny sex and salvation of *Controversy*-era Prince (the guitar-centered "Boy Life in America" hinges on "All I want is pussy/Give me some religion"). *Masterpiece* could've been shorter, but people said that about *Hamlet*, too. Chesnutt delivers on those expectations, mostly through an unhinged display of both vulnerability and braggadocio.

MILES MARSHALL LEWIS

DEEPAK CHOPRA & FRIENDS

A GIFT OF LOVE II: OCEANS OF ECSTASY ★

RASA

With Christy Turlington and Melanie Griffith on vocals, author branches into electronic sedatives

Sure, he's an expert on spiritual guidance and alternative healing, but Deepak Chopra has also mastered the more earthly fields of cross-

ASTONISHING FACT! >>

PHIL COLLINS once chartered a plane to fly a bottle of HP steak sauce from London to his home in Switzerland.



Elizabeth Cook: Somewhere, a horse is going cold.

promotion and hype. Not content to have sold millions of books that offer self-help tips on enlightenment, the India-born M.D. has master-minded this puzzling collection. Over soft chill-out beats and exotic Indian drones, actors, musicians, super-models and others in dire need of spirituality recite reflective verses ("Life is but a dewdrop on a trembling leaf") so purple, they make Kahlil Gibran sound like Charles Bukowski. The track on which Antonio Banderas, in his Spanish lisp, murmurs, "The wild wind played on your naked breasts" is destined to become a cult classic.

ROB TANNENBAUM

CKY

INFILTRATE-DESTROY-REBUILD ★★

ISLAND

The band's name stands for "Camp Kill Yourself." Cute!

Even before they made their major-label debut, CKY had achieved underground cachet: They've provided the soundtrack for skateboarding videos, and drummer Jess Margera was featured in an episode of

Jackass, during which he tumbled down a staircase in a grocery cart. The current hard-rock landscape lacks eccentricity, which CKY have in spades. This Pennsylvania quartet applies a spit-shined new-wave sheen to mournful riff-rockers — richly distorted guitars conjoin with peeling synthesizers on "Escape From Hellview" and "Attached at the Hip." Too bad the singing is so weak — "Plastic Plan" sports a disco beat and lilting melody, but Deron Miller's wispy affectations short-circuit the tune's effectiveness, turning it into a corn-fed New Order.

ROB KEMP

PHIL COLLINS

TESTIFY ★★

ATLANTIC

Seventies art-rock drummer-turned-singer throws his arms around ballads, burns his drum kit

The news that Phil Collins went temporarily deaf while recording the ballad-heavy *Testify* will doubtless be greeted with ironic chuckles by those who pray to lose their hearing when confronted by his voice. In truth, there is little on Collins's first studio album in six years to compare with either the work of his Genesis heyday or his still heartbreaking 1981 solo debut, *Face Value*. Such anodyne efforts as "Swing Low" and "Can't Stop Loving You" sound like Collins is still in Disney mode following his recent soundtrack work on *Tarzan*, while his attempt to re-create the atmosphere of "In the Air Tonight" on "This Love This Heart" is remarkable only for his complete failure to do so. Most irritating is the lack of skins-beating from the man who, if nothing else, remains one of the all-time great drummers.

CLARK COLLIS



CKY, after being told they share a review page with Phil Collins



JAMIE LYNN SIGLER
MEADOW SOPRANO



EMINEM THE EMINEM SHOW AFTERMATH/INTERSCOPE

"I love Eminem. He's an awesome performer. You have to listen to his lyrics. He's kind of scary, but he's a great artist."

ELIZABETH COOK

HEY Y'ALL ★★

WARNER BROS.

Salty country debutante embraces tradition, loses her cherry to Satan

Her father did time for hauling mob moonshine. She grew up in a trailer and worked as an accountant for Price-Waterhouse; then the Grand Ole Opry discovered her. Same old story, eh? Elizabeth Cook's music can't always match the Day-Glo hues of her remarkable biography, as her generic-Nashville single, "Stupid Things," shows. But her down-home voice and earthy compositions are convincing across an emotional spectrum, from the old-time gospel of "God's Got a Plan for Me" through the droll appeal for Ms. Parton's guidance in "Dolly" to the imprudently moist account of devil-shagging in "Demon": "Makes me feel dirty to have a demon lyin' in bed with me."

PHIL SUTCLIFFE

ELVIS COSTELLO & THE IMPOSTERS

CRUEL SMILE ★★

ISLAND

Cheeky rock savant issues a catchy compilation of remixes, live tracks and "airshots"

Given that he is one of rock's more perverse SOB's, it's hardly surprising that Elvis Costello's previous rarities collections (1980's *Ten Bloody Marys* & *Ten How's Your Fathers*, 1987's *Out of Our Idiot*) frequently boasted songs better than those on his regular albums. But where those compilations trawled a substantial time span for their respective gems, *Cruel Smile* collects odds and ends from the last year. It leans heavily on electronica-dusted mixes of tracks from his back-on-form *When I Was Cruel* and some not-all-that-good live cuts, including a "Watching the Detectives"/"My Funny Valentine" medley. El's chart-topping (in Japan!) orchestral version of Nat King Cole's pop standard "Smile," on the other hand, is a definite peach.

CLARK COLLIS →

DEBORAH COX

THE MORNING AFTER ★★

J RECORDS

Slick soul singer trades high-NRG disco for some very soft Cox

Toronto's Deborah Cox is a silky R&B singer (and songwriter) who, at the drop of a charging house beat, transforms herself into an old-school disco singer; it's as if Whitney Houston spun on a dime into the uncanny reincarnation of '70s-peak Donna Summer. Here Cox spends most of her time off the dance floor, working with producers Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis (and others) on accomplished electro- ("Up & Down") and hip-hop-influenced ("2 Good 2 Be True") new soul. She closes with "Mr. Lonely" and "Absolutely Not" — two club tunes in the booming tradition of "Nobody's Supposed to Be Here," her wildly fused 1998 gospel-into-house rave-up. The high polish and high energy aren't exact matches, but Cox pulls off both uncommonly well.

JAMES HUNTER

KIMYA DAWSON

I'M SORRY THAT SOMETIMES I'M MEAN ★★

ROUGH TRADE/SANCTUARY

Moldy Peaches girl launches her solo career with slightly overripe debut

Like plenty of girls, Kimya Dawson spent too much time in her room singing along to her favorite songs. Unlike most girls, she never really stopped. On her how-lo-fi-can-you-go? solo debut, the distaff half of New York antifolk wack jobs the Moldy Peaches amateurishly warbles 11 songs that no doubt sound different in her head than they do coming out of her mouth. She plays guitar too, strumming up and down on every beat in a manner familiar to any father who has grimaced through his kid's school talent show. But don't underestimate Dawson's power: Her amateurishness — even if it's a pose — gives sad girls across America the chance to sing along to ditties about abused children and pirates.

JEFF SALAMON

THE DEVIANTS

DR. CROW ★★

TRACK

Ancient iconoclasts, still up to no good in their fourth decade

Formed in England in the '60s, the Deviants have survived on rock's fringe,

ASTONISHING FACT! >>

DEBORAH COX can rotate her tongue 360 degrees.

mixing psychedelia, R&B, raw noise and subversive attitudes and wheezes through the absurdist theater of "Diablo's Cadillac" and the grubby "Bela Lugosi 2002," while the shambling blues of "You're Gonna Need Somebody on Your Bond" pairs Farren and Concrete Blonde's Johnette Napolitano for a triumphantly scruffy duet. *Dr. Crow* captures the exhilarating sound of rock

guitarist Andy Colquhoun's barbed licks, the band lurches and wheezes through the absurdist theater of "Diablo's Cadillac" and the grubby "Bela Lugosi 2002," while the shambling blues of "You're Gonna Need Somebody on Your Bond" pairs Farren and Concrete Blonde's Johnette Napolitano for a triumphantly scruffy duet. *Dr. Crow* captures the exhilarating sound of rock

& roll as it decomposes, growling and wisecracking all the way.

JON YOUNG

JAMES LUTHER DICKINSON

FREE BEER TOMORROW

★★★★

ARTEMIS

Grizzled MVP of the South rises again, with backwoods solo album 30 years in the making

The father of North Mississippi All-Stars Cody and Luther Dickinson, and a Memphis music MVP for four decades, this keyboardist and occasional guitarist is best known as a sideman to the stars (Stones, Dylan) and producer to unproduceable wild cards (Big Star in the '70s, the Replacements in the '80s). At 61, he's finally made the "follow-up" to his solo debut, 1972's *Dixie Fried*. Full of world-weariness ("If I Could Only Fly"), wariness and crankiness ("Asshole"), the record's feel is distinctly eclectic, Southern fin-de-siècle, especially on the off-the-wall outlaw epic "Billy & Oscar." A New Orleans humidity hovers over much of the music and lyrics, and Dickinson's defiant attitude and classic "bad" (but effective) voice keep things blissfully oblivious to trends.

JOHN MORTHLAND

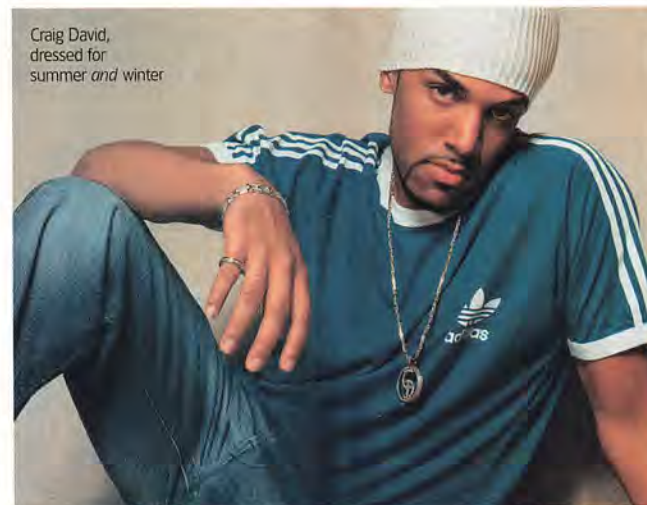
ECHO IS YOUR LOVE

8 HOURS ★★

STICKFIGURE

Second album from awkwardly named Helsinki art-rockers with their heads stuck in Greenwich Village

For those who bemoan Sonic Youth's retreat into the cloistered world of the avant-garde, there are plenty of bands dedicated to replicating the rockier *Sister* and *Daydream Nation*. Echo Is Your Love disguise their true intentions on the haunting opener, "Turn It Off," a Japanese-style mantra embellished by a chorus of plinking guitars and female singer Nea's startling, gurgling vocals. But elsewhere, this is Sonic Youth as screaming emo kids would like to remember them — "Useless Spells U-S-E-L-E-S-S" moves from a staccato rock attack into a glorious rush of →



Craig David, dressed for summer and winter

HOUSE OF DAVID

British R&B star gets mad, tries to prove he's bad!

CRAIG DAVID

SLICKER THAN YOUR AVERAGE ★★

WILDSTAR/ATLANTIC

➤ YOU KNOW YOU'VE got it good — and bad — when a TV comic reaps laughs doing an impression of you as a bed-wetter. Craig David's 2000 debut, *Born to Do It*, did it, selling 7 million copies. He became a big celebrity back home in England, where his sweet, fluttery voice enthralled fans, while his safe-as-milk image had a British comedian giving him a rubber sheet.

With *Slicker Than Your Average*, David wants you to know he's no wimp, gosh darn it. "Fast Cars" starts with the sound of broken glass and a car alarm, and ends as the boy next door speeds away from the scene. "They said I wasn't from the streets," he sneers on the title song. "Now they're telling me 'bout my imagery, how I'm so squeaky-clean whenever I'm on TV." He even recorded some of these songs in a makeshift studio on a tenement block in London, to add an extra atmosphere of menace.

But what makes the stop-and-go, drum-thick music on this CD

such a smooth ride, is that despite the pout, this is still the same old David. With a sky-high voice that flits like a hummingbird, he's a supple stylist who may swagger but can't help but lean to the sunny side of the street. "I never used to be a troublemaker; now I don't even want to please the fans," he fronts on "Rise and Fall." But that trouble-making line comes in (ha!) a duet with Sting. David matches the old crooner moan for moan, while Der Stingle, the master of celebrity, counsels the upstart to keep a chill head and not get frantic.

What's new on *Slicker Than Your Average* is not edginess but David's move away from underground two-step — sort of drum & bass gone glossy — toward a modern, mainstream R&B record. *Slicker* is full of Timbaland-style production, booty-call ballads and even Spanish guitars. Sometimes being real means revealing the marshmallow within. *RJ SMITH*

CRAIG DAVID'S CURRENT LISTENING

INDIA.ARIE *VOYAGE TO INDIA* UNIVERSAL

AVRIL LAVIGNE *LET GO* ARISTA

KIRSTEN DUNST
SPIDER-MAN'S WOMAN

JIMMY FALLON
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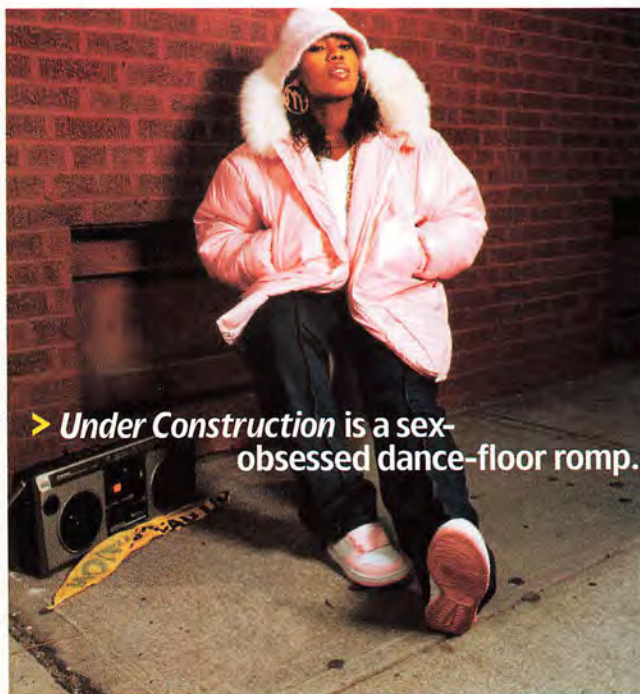
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IN THE PINK

Rap's futuristic heroine time-travels to the past

MISSY ELLIOTT

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

★★★★★

ELEKTRA

>> **DEATH IS PREOCCUPYING** Missy Elliott. Near the end of her fourth album, she says the memories of Aaliyah and Lisa "Left Eye" Lopes are weighing hard on her, as are the murders of Notorious B.I.G. and Tupac Shakur — the closing, elegiac "Can You Hear Me" imagines them all meeting in heaven, and as she tries to make sense of their deaths, September 11 can't be far from her mind.

But *Under Construction* is hardly a morose comedown. Elliott doesn't dwell on the ghosts of her friends, choosing instead to mine the sights and sounds of a happier hip-hop past for comfort: She has traveled to the old-school era of fat-laced Pumas and rampant break dancing — when battles meant "yo mama" disses, not bloodshed.

Like 2001's *Miss E... So Addictive*, which had the feel-good club drug Ecstasy at its hedonistic core, *Under Construction* is a sex-obsessed dance-floor romp. "Work It" sees a playfully erotic Missy spread over a squirming, vintage synth-and-drum machine beat by producer and constant sidekick Timbaland. It rides out on the bell-clanging loop made famous by Run-

DMC's "Peter Piper," and other blasts from the past abound. "Funky Fresh Dressed" borrows a hook from MC Lyte and samples the backward-flowing molasses of the Beastie Boys' "Paul Revere." Nostalgia turns explicit on "Back in the Day," as Jay-Z blithely name-checks bygoners from "KRS-One to Nineteen Naughty Three" and Missy coos, "Hip-hop has *chaaanged*."

Which should make fans pause. After all, Missy and Timbaland — whose staggered cadences forced hip-hop into new and delightfully contorted positions from 1997's hit "The Rain" to the snaky thump of last year's "Get Ur Freak On" — were instrumental in that change. Tempering futurism with retro-rap here, they feed the old through the new and refresh both.

Shaken by violent hip-hop feuds and the passing of friends, the former Ecstasy spokesmodel asks herself how long she can keep the party going. Brilliantly reanimating the music of her youth through her club-ready sound, Elliott collapses past and present to defy death and answer: on and on, way past the break of dawn. **JONAH WEINER**

MISSY ELLIOTT'S CURRENT LISTENING

- >> MC LYTE
LYTE AS A ROCK, FIRST PRIORITY
- >> DEBARGE
THE DEBARGES, MOTOWN

noise, the fevered "Unable" moans and drones in all the right places, and "The Protagonist" so closely replicates the opening of SY's "Teenage Riot" that it's possibly an inscrutable Finnish joke.

JOHN MULLEN

ESG

STEP OFF ★★★

SOUL JAZZ

Much-sampled funky New York sisters reunite — and now their daughters are in the band

Arty funk minimalists ESG made their first splash in the early '80s with "Moody," a staple song in New York's underground discos. The four South Bronx sisters (Renee, Valerie, Marie and Deborah Scroggins) disbanded after their first LP, but hip-hop heavyweights from Public Enemy to 3rd Bass sampled the spacey, simple beats of "UFO," an ESG B-side, again and again. Their recent reunion (they're now augmented by Renee's daughters, Nicole and Chistelle) is nothing less than a comeback. On "My Street," Renee's vocal sneer competes with a heavy-handed tom-tom drum assault, while a syncopated bass never strays from two notes. Brilliantly restrained throughout, ESG's sparse, mechanical funk remains unique and vital.

GERALD HAMMILL

GZA/GENIUS

LEGEND OF THE LIQUID SWORD ★★★

MCA

The rapper's name is pronounced Jizza — and his third solo release is a lyricist's wet dream

With so many wild personalities in the group, Staten Island, New York's nine-member Wu-Tang Clan sometimes seems like a hip-hop Home for the Criminally Insane. The subdued GZA (a.k.a. Genius, born Gary Grice) makes his mark by unspooling paragraphs of vivid prose with rhythmic perfection: A gravelly baritone, he sounds like Ol' Dirty Bastard weaned off moonshine and taught to enunciate. GZA's street narratives come wrapped in metaphor, but even when he wields chemistry

I LOVE THIS CD!



KATIE HOLMES
STAR OF DAWSON'S CREEK AND PHONE BOOTH



DAVE MATTHEWS BAND BUSTED STUFF

"I was lucky enough to host *Saturday Night Live* with them as the musical guest. They're one of the best bands around."

against competitors — “A solid mass of minerals, easily broke down/Hard-rock MCs, you’re nothing but compounds” — on the funk lick-laced “Knock Knock,” he’s tough and grounded. This abstract skill put his 1995 masterpiece, *Liquid Swords* (name-checked here in the title and every other song), in the running for best Wu solo album, but dense, volatile production pushed it over the top — the prosaic soul loops here are solid enough, but fall short of the legend.

JONAH WEINER

HOT HOT HEAT

MAKE UP THE BREAKDOWN

★★

SUB POP

Second album by high-concept Canadians who raided their parents’ record collections

Roughing up smooth pop melodies with big beats in a rock-dance fusion, Hot Hot Heat would like to be the next Duran Duran. (Which may shock the reunited Duran Duran, who also hope to be the next Duran Duran.) This quartet from British Columbia follows the spunky tradition of early new wave:

While keyboardist Steve Bays’s agitated vocals are meant to create a sense of urgency, it’s hard to take seriously generic tales of lost girls and restless boys such as “Naked in the City Again” and “Get In or Get Out.” In their desperate eagerness to please, HHH offer a few modest pleasures, including the mildly funky “Talk to Me, Dance With Me” (shades of Duran’s “Notorious”) and “In Cairo,” a lush mood piece designed to accompany late-night meditation.

JON YOUNG

IKARA COLT

CHAT AND BUSINESS ★★★

EPITAPH

British punks write the best Sonic Youth album in ages

Having been the first to embrace the Strokes, the Hives and the White Stripes, the U.K. is inevitably now awash with snotty garage rock outfits of its own.

ASTONISHING FACT! >>

MISSY ELLIOTT once wrote to Michael Jackson asking him to pick her up after elementary school, and waited for him.

Most are rotten — too reliant on messy hair and the Stooges’ songbook — but Ikara Colt have clambered up the food chain by choosing the short, sharp shock of mid-’80s Sonic Youth as the template for their entire being. Singers Paul Resende and Claire Ingram are Ikara’s Thurston Moore and Kim Gordon, trading sullen, disinterested vocals on “Rudd” and riding a thrillingly tinny, deliberately atonal racket that, on “Belgravia,” rocks with far more vigor than their role models have mustered in a decade.

RYAN ELIOT

JAHEIM

STILL GHETTO ★★★

DIVINE MILL/WARNER BROS.

R&B singer’s sophomore album reveals an old soul trapped in a young body

On the follow-up to his platinum debut, *Ghetto Love*, Jaheim retraces the path of old soul greats, but with a little hip-hop strut. The 24-year-old has a voice like your father’s favorite singer — deep, syrupy and dripping with pronounced emotion — and with the help of his producers, including Naughty by →

WASHED OUT

“Babylon” neofolkie constructs a colorless follow-up to *White Ladder*

DAVID GRAY

A NEW DAY AT MIDNIGHT

★★★

ATO/RCA

→ *WHITE LADDER*, the album that rescued David Gray from obscurity, was hardly an obvious hit. Recorded in the singer-songwriter’s London apartment for the cost of a decent pair of shoes, its homemade charm and emotional immediacy were worlds away from the twice-shined pop that made up much of last year’s Top 40. But Gray’s quiet, uncluttered sound was so obviously heartfelt that millions were smitten, and *White Ladder* became a multiplatinum smash on both sides of the Atlantic.

Hoping lightning will strike twice, Gray has concocted a slightly snazzier version of that approach for his fifth album, *A New Day at Midnight*. As with *Ladder*, Gray and collaborator Craig “Clune” McClune play most of the instruments themselves, but this time they’ve significantly broadened their palette, fleshing out the songs with strings and a brass band.

Some touches are quite ingenious: An African thumb piano opens “Kangaroo,” then locks into the tune’s dreamy clockwork pulse. But the



flashy pedal-steel solo cluttering “Caroline” merely seems self-indulgent.

Still, it’s hard to blame Gray and McClune for trying to inject some color into the drab monochrome of this material. Instead of the first-blush-of-romance openness that made *White Ladder* so moving, Gray gives voice to worry, resignation, muted hope and melancholy — many songs deal with the recent death of his father — and the emotions, though genuine, aren’t nearly as inspiring. Even when he tries to tart them up, whether through instrumental frippery or punning titles like

“Knowhere,” the drabness seeps through like a cold, gray fog.

None of this makes *A New Day at Midnight* any less listenable. But the album merely washes pleasantly past, tickling the ear and delivering a few hummable refrains. There’s nothing here to lift listeners the way *White Ladder* did. **J.D. CONSIDINE**

DAVID GRAY’S CURRENT LISTENING

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THE GUIDE NEW RELEASES

Nature's Kay Gee, he merits the comparison. Elegant slow-dance beats are colored with caramel blaxploitation-era melodies as Jaheim colloquially sings the ghetto's praises. On "Fabulous," he watches "shots get popped," but then, backed by a kiddie choir, advises, "Don't hate on us, we're fabulous." Marvin Gaye found the same inspiration from the mess of inner-city blues; he just said it differently.

JOSEPH PATEL

KOTTONMOUTH KINGS

ROLLIN' STONED ★★

SUBURBAN NOISE/CAPITOL

Mostly sturdy pipe dreams from the skateboard stoners

Kottonmouth Kings' previous CD titles include *Hidden Stash* and *High Society*, so the hook is clear: This seven-piece pot posse from California's Orange County loves its chronic. "I got two states of mind: stoned and asleep," Johnny Richter raps on "4-2-0." On their kaleidoscopic fifth album, they add some pop flavor to their usual punky hip-hop Slurpee. The largely acoustic first single,

"Positive Vibes," sounds like Sublime at a campfire hootenanny. Yeah, the happy hemp monkeys thrash around aimlessly at times, but when they lock on a groove ("Zero Tolerance" or "Sleepers"), they sound like Cypress Hill with goofy chops. These guys are the bong.

DAVID HILTBRAND

ALISON KRAUSS + UNION STATION

LIVE ★★★

ROUNDER

Sweetheart of modern bluegrass delivers a sparkling two-disc live set

There's something for every Alison Krauss fan on this live double disc, even if the straighter bluegrass tunes are slightly outnumbered by the singer and fiddler player's trademark just-south-of-sappy ballads. The set list focuses on *New Favorites*, including two that'll have you yelling "O brother!": a delicate, all-

ASTONISHING FACT! >>

DAVE MATTHEWS used to be the "sandwich boy" at a bar called Miller's, in Charlottesville, Virginia.

vocal "Down to the River to Pray," and a rousing "I Am a Man of Constant Sorrow" (marred somewhat by a clap-along audience). It's hard to improve on AKUS's studio production, but the instrumentals here do stretch and sparkle — particularly on disc two, on which the dean of dobro, Jerry Douglas, gets a chance to shine. Alas, Krauss's occasional slightly off-color stage banter is absent — for that, you have to buy a ticket.

JOHN DEFORE

TALIB KWELI

QUALITY ★★★★★

RAWKUS/MCA

Fresh off a tour with Jay-Z, underground hero raps conscious, invokes the Beatles on his solo debut

Talib Kweli has risen to underground prominence as a team player — trading verses with Mos Def in Black Star and splitting the bill with DJ Hi-Tek as Reflection Eternal. After years of give-and-take camaraderie, Kweli, 27, stands alone with a Black Panther-like fist in the air. "Like John Lennon, imagine all the people/Watch me rock like Paul

FINAL ACT

The late Beatle's final album, begun in 1999 and released posthumously

GEORGE HARRISON

BRAINWASHED ★★★

DARK HORSE/EMI

>> WITH THE NOTABLE exceptions of Bob Dylan and Neil Young, most of the '60s rock aristocracy has long since retreated from the idea of kicking out the jams and boldly redefining music's parameters. Until his death last year, George Harrison was no exception. Indeed, after an intermittent run of inoffensive soft-rock albums that began in the mid-'70s, he seemed to have quit music altogether: Following 1987's *Cloud Nine* and his contributions to two Traveling Wilburys albums, he retired to an English country mansion and got on with his gardening.

Brainwashed proves that his time away from the spotlight didn't provoke much of a rethink. Coproduced by his longtime compadre Jeff Lynne (who's assisted by Harrison's son, Dhani), most of it sounds as innocuously pleasant as such long-forgotten albums as *Thirty-Three and 1/3* (1976) and *Somewhere in England* (1981). Harrison plays his trademark slide guitar on just about everything; Lynne contributes the processed drum sound and soupy harmonies he perfected with ELO, and the music



Curious, George?

sounds utterly divorced from the twenty-first century.

Those searching for clues about Harrison's mindset at the end of his life will find some intrigue: "Looking for My Life" and "Stuck Inside a Cloud" are affecting glimpses of the introspection that comes with the imminent prospect of death. George watchers are also advised to check out the title track, in which he appears to dispense his final word on the state of the planet (we're all screwed unless we find God), before ascending into a Hindu prayer sung in Sanskrit.

And that's that. *Brainwashed* suggests that Harrison's last years were largely comfortable, slow-paced and unaffected by any worries about his relevance. Compared to many of his contemporaries (Mick Jagger springs to mind), Harrison comes across as idyllic. JOHN HARRIS

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>> TRAVELING WILBURYS

VOL. 1 WILBURY

McCartney from now until the last Beatle drop," he raps with characteristic cleverness on the up-tempo "Get By." *Quality* is full of witticisms, but it draws equal strength from sonic diversity: "Stand to the Side" is sweetened by R&B crooning and ends with tap-dancing from Broadway star Savion Glover; the guitar-inflected "Talk to You" is hip-hop mood music, with an a cappella breakdown by singer Bilal. "I wanna write the songs to right the wrongs," Kweli states on "Stand to the Side." And he recites his right-minded rhymes with solo-star charisma, which is all Kweli has ever needed to get over on his own.

MILES MARSHALL LEWIS

LEMON JELLY

LOST HORIZONS ★★★

XL/BEGGARS GROUP

Sophomore release from British techno-freakoids

Lemon Jelly — the brainchild of Björk producer Nick Franglen and designer Fred Deakin — is a "dance" act that only the most chemically banjaxed would actually dance to. Their 2000 debut, *lemonjellyky*, was a delightful mixture of ambient keyboard trickery and peculiarly English samples, and *Lost Horizon's* formula is identical. "Ramblin' Man" boasts a recital of a list of geographic locations over a Pink Floyd-ish mesmerizing backing track, and "Nice Weather for Ducks" mixes a seemingly ancient English children's chant ("All the ducks are swimming in the water!") with the world's first cyberpunk-mariachi band. The result is beguiling enough — but anyone who's enjoyed its predecessor may not find the follow-up effort entirely essential.

CLARK COLLIS

DAVE MATTHEWS BAND

LIVE AT FOLSOM FIELD, BOULDER, COLORADO ★★★★★

RCA

Fourth live double CD in 10 years from this adored band

In the studio, the Dave Matthews Band stresses songs; the playing is →



ARIISA HILL
IN THE CAST OF
THE REAL WORLD
12: LAS VEGAS



REMY SHAND
THE WAY I FEEL
UNIVERSAL

"He has a very sultry, almost Marvin Gaye/D'Angelo-esque essence to him. It's wonderful."



Faith Hill: You should see the moisturizer bills!

BEAUTIFUL FAITH

Country-ish superstar casts herself as a smart Celine Dion

FAITH HILL

CRY ★★★★★

WARNER BROS. NASHVILLE

FAITH HILL EMERGED in the mid-'90s, singing attractive yet somewhat stilted country, notably a cover of Janis Joplin's "Piece of My Heart." But by 1998, after Hill married Tim McGraw and began working with Byron Gallimore, his uninhibited producer, her music took a turn for the free, which greatly improved her work.

It's a rare country singer who gracefully slips the word *centrifugal* into a hit, as Hill did in "This Kiss," the single that marked her artistic arrival. That crossover song set up 1999's septuple-platinum *Breathe*, on which Hill gave rock and singer-songwriter tunes her own glowingly confident, light-filled spins. Among country's A-list women, she contrasted with Shania Twain's imported Euro-Canadian stylings and the Dixie Chicks' smart-ass twang.

On *Cry*, her fifth album, Hill ripens, showing a boldness few artists ever manage. "Free," an upbeat but un-sugary pop-funk workout, introduces the vivacious rhythms and unrestrained rock guitars that form the album's sonic hallmarks.

Unlike most pop-directed albums, there are no wasted tracks here: Highlights are the dark, carefully written title song, in which Aerosmith's peerless gift for rock balladry gets some blond competition; "One," a gorgeously sung R&B/dance tune; and "Stronger," on which she connects with the deep-soul frankness of Dusty Springfield. Her singing is the liquid, toned, gulpy work of a woman who loves the nuanced music of country greats but is otherwise fearless about abandoning Grand Ole Opry traditions.

"I cry," Hill sings on "This Is Me," the album's key song, restating the theme of tears that runs throughout the collection, "just like everybody else." She makes a fairly standard rock march feel exhilarating. On this unparalleled album, Hill imbues the broadest kind of pop with the literacy of country classicism and the emotionalism of spellbinding vintage soul, all with the taste of an interior decorator. JAMES HUNTER

FAITH HILL'S
CURRENT LISTENING

NORAH JONES
COME AWAY WITH ME BLUE NOTE

U2
ALL THAT YOU CAN'T LEAVE BEHIND
INTERSCOPE

3 DOORS DOWN

AWAY FROM THE SUN

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"WHEN I'M GONE"

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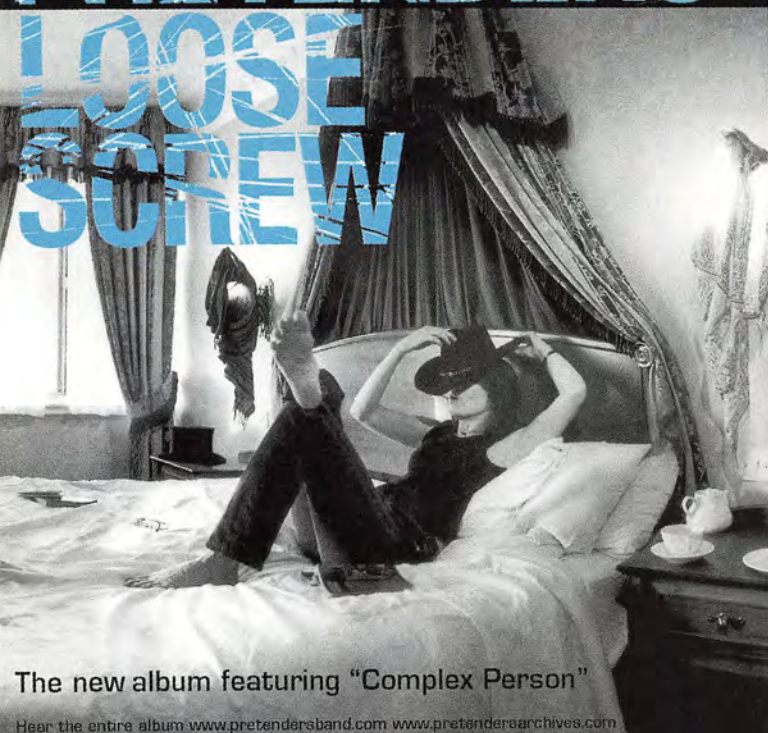
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Susan Tedeschi



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LL Cool J: "Only three stars? You sure?"



TOUGH AS L

Business as usual for rap's muscle king

LL COOL J

TEN ★★

DEF JAM

▶▶ SINCE HIS DEBUT 17 years ago, LL Cool J has been the most visible rapper in the game — and the most erratic, too. With a flurry of standout singles, one great album (1990's *Mama Said Knock You Out* ★★★★★), several films and one terrible sitcom role (*In the House*, which even UPN knew enough to cancel), he's created an ultrasuccessful persona: a sensitive ladies' man, street enough to preach to the brothers, tough enough to put you in your place.

His tenth album banks on this tried-and-true combo of lady-baiting pap and streetwise bravado. Lyrically, this Crassanova hasn't changed his game — he calls his baby "Lollipop," promises a tour of his Benz, says he'll put his sting in you, down low. Musically, though, *Ten* is a small step forward, as a handful of hot beat engineers beef up LL's typically breezy, jet-setting funk with some new-school bounce.

The Neptunes, who take the prize as the hardest workers in showbiz this year, lay down a mudd

synth pattern on the single "Love You Better," which features a bland soul hook and ultrageneric lyrics, full of romantic vows to try harder.

The production duo hits harder on the spare, bass-heavy "Niggy, Niggy Nuts," on which LL freestyles with more dexterity and speed than his deep, sexy voice usually allows for. Only the Dream Team-produced "After School" takes the middle road between seductive come-ons and rote swagger, as Big L and P. Diddy trade boasts over funky schoolyard chants in order to lure a teenage cutie to their respective lairs.

Besides Puffy, the only big-name guest on the record is the young soulstress Amerie, who sings the hook on the breezy, love-is-bliss track "Paradise." Mostly, *Ten* is *The LL Cool J Show* — a reliable sitcom, now in its tenth season, detailing the bachelorhood of a brawny lover-man. This series could stay in reruns for years. *CHRISTIAN HOARD*

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▶▶ JA RULE
PAIN IS LOVE MURDER INC./DEF JAM

▶▶ HEAVY D
BIG TYME UPTOWN

secondary. Live, the priorities are reversed, a result of the quintet's hard-touring roots on the jam-band circuit. But even onstage, Matthews and band avoid instrumental self-indulgence as they show how catchy their tunes can be. On this set, a devoted Colorado crowd treats "Bartender" and "Big Eyed Fish" like old favorites — even though the show was recorded in July 2001, months before the songs were officially released on *Busted Stuff*. Apart from an overblown (and over-long) take on Bob Dylan's "All Along the Watchtower," which is due for a respite from being covered, this set eloquently argues for DMB's status as America's best mainstream rock band.

J.D. CONSIDINE

TIM MCGRAW

TIM MCGRAW AND THE DANCEHALL DOCTORS

★★★★

CURB

Country superstar rejects Nashville custom, continues on as the new Garth Brooks

Recorded not with studio superpickers, as is the norm for country acts, but with a smoking road band that has toured together for years — and recorded not in Nashville but in upstate New York — the music on Tim McGraw's eighth and best album stays country — unambiguous melodies, emotional singing, a tune called "Home" that opens with Mama cooking in the kitchen. Yet it is played and assembled like rock. Stopping short of retro, McGraw — a 35-year-old raised in Louisiana — bathes songs in the funky, absorbingly handmade qualities that were the '70s' time-honored gifts to music. A likeable cover of Elton John's "Tiny Dancer" is here. More crucially, so is "She's My Kind of Rain," a dramatic, quick-moving ballad with strings arranged by Paul Buckmaster (a long-time collaborator of both John and the Rolling Stones) that is the creative apex of McGraw's seriously fun country.

JAMES HUNTER



Joni Mitchell:
"Why did I date David Crosby?"

LIZA MINNELLI

LIZA'S BACK ☆☆

J RECORDS

Aging showbiz baby hits the comeback trail, but her pizzazz can't cover the spent vocal cords

Liza Minnelli has been through a lot — rehab, double hip replacement, encephalitis and, worst of all, Jay Leno jokes — and those experiences sadly speak through her during *Liza's Back*, a recording from recent concerts, organized by David Gest, her concert-promoter husband and reality-TV costar. Even as the 56-year-old legend revisits the *Cabaret* songs she made famous, plus her signature "New York, New York," the results don't make for easy listening: Her range has shrunk and lowered, and her vibrato has widened so much, she often sounds like a 45-rpm single playing at LP speed. Yet few living entertainers embody showbiz with as much superhuman gusto as Minnelli. Although her musicality has tragically weakened, her theatricality and force of feeling remain surreally strong. You can almost hear the hand gestures.

BARRY WALTERS

JONI MITCHELL

TRAVELOGUE ☆☆

NONESUCH

Lyrical legend records lavish 22-song retrospective with the London Symphony Orchestra. Why?

A twentieth album from the cranky genius of '60s folk-pop may warrant a special approach, but recording a two-CD set with an orchestra is a conceit straight out of '70s prog-rock hubris. On *Travelogue*, Mitchell rerecords her old songs with arrangements by Vince Mendoza, who has worked with Björk and lite-jazz nuisances the Yellowjackets. Her hits are under-represented, more recent songs are overrepresented, and Mendoza's overly ornate orchestrations are dull, self-absorbed affairs, frequently swamping the great songs and Mitchell's vocals. It just doesn't work. Why rerecord something as near-perfect as *Court and Spark*'s "Just Like This Train" with extra strings that don't suit it? Why give "The Sire of Sorrow" (originally on 1994's *Turbulent Indigo*) an intro out of a John Ford western? An interesting exercise for Mitchell, perhaps, but a tedious self-indulgence to everyone else. Someone should have said no to this willful original.

IAN CRANNA →

ASTONISHING FACT! >>

TIM MCGRAW plays two to three hours of basketball before every concert, and listens to the Gap Band get psyched up.

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THE GUIDE NEW RELEASES

MONOTRONA

HAWKEYE & FIREBIRD ★★

MENLO PARK

NYC weirdo sings about superheroes
over old video-game theme songs

On her deliberately lo-fi debut, electro outsider Monotrona (née Jodie McCann) chronicles the adventures of two superheroes she has invented: Hawkeye & Firebird. Think of them as non-union Asian knockoffs of Batman & Robin, and don't worry if you can't follow the plot: In an overly earnest, off-key falsetto, the New York singer switches from English to Korean (learned especially for this album), the computerized Hawkeye sounds like a Speak & Spell mated with E.T., and the occasionally decipherable lyrics are absurd anyway ("Rodan, Botan and Godzilla/We are all deadly killers"). "Cadillac Fantasy" and "You Know It" are one part kitschy, nine parts catchy, but Monotrona wrote only the lyrics. The decimated synth beats — hopelessly cheesy, overexcited dance spasms — come from Commodore 64 video games made in the mid-'80s. It's manic karaoke meets performance art, and it just might help you beat that high score in Sanxion.

JONAH WEINER

MUDVAYNE

THE END OF ALL THINGS
TO COME ★★

EPIC

Surprise! Math-inspired metal is
about as much fun as staying after
school

Call Mudvayne the Einsteins of hard rock: This Peoria, Illinois, quartet likes to expound on the high concept behind its "math metal." As on its first two records, every track here is constructed around an elaborate series of mathematical stratagems, which result in complex rhythmic patterns. For all the finger counting and calculating, Mudvayne don't sound different from other prog-influenced metal bands. Barring the occasional

I LOVE THIS CD!



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INTERPOL
TURN ON THE
BRIGHT LIGHTS
MATADOR

"It feels like New York in
the early '80s — when
junkies, not Yorkshire
terriers in sweaters, ruled
its mean streets."

rhythmic pileup (the shifting "Solve Et Coagula" evokes a particularly percussive train wreck), *The End* is rather ordinary — severe, belligerent riffs and vocals that sound as though singer Chud gargles molten lava. Combining the complexity of Tool with the sheer brutality of Slipknot, the brainiest guys in class are nearly as unimaginative as the dullards in the back of the room.

ROB KEMP

WILLIE NELSON & FRIENDS

STARS & GUITARS ★★

LOST HIGHWAY

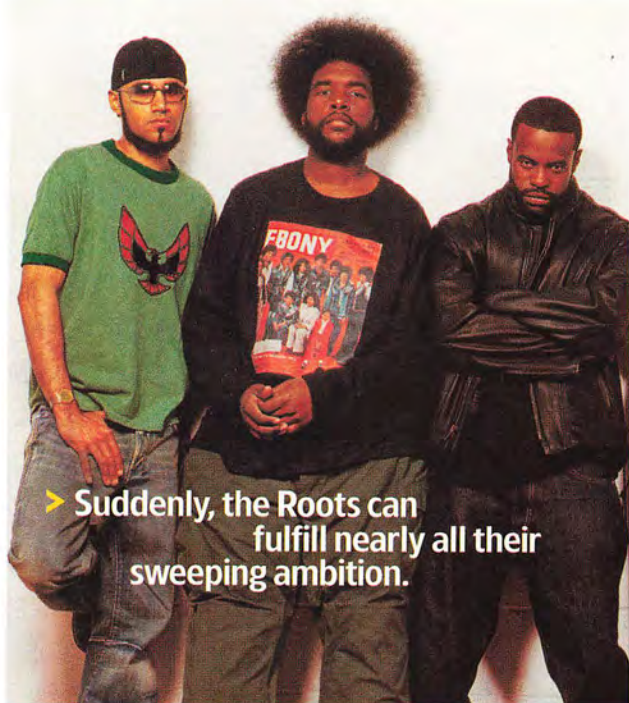
Ponytailed pot smoker rolls live with
star-studded "friends"

Willie Nelson is hip and high enough to have sung with Kid Rock earlier this year on *The Great Divide*, an alliance that hints at the breadth of the country master's tastes. On *Stars & Guitars*, a live companion piece for *The Great Divide*, Nelson shares the mic with mainstream rocker Sheryl Crow, who chimes in on a twangy "Whiskey River"; Nashville superstar Toby Keith, who lends his comically deep croon to "Good Hearted Woman"; and alt-country upstart Ryan Adams, who joins a cover of Jimmy Cliff's classic "The Harder They Come" and imitates Keith Richards on the Rolling Stones' "Dead Flowers." Matchbox Twenty's Rob Thomas is out of his element on the whimsical "Maria, Shut Up and Kiss Me." But Nelson, at this point in his career, is such a force of personality →



Mudvayne singer:
"Ha! You guys
look idiotic!"

WireImage.com (Sanz)



➤ Suddenly, the Roots can fulfill nearly all their sweeping ambition.

KINGS OF ROCK

The best rap-rock hybrid since Run-DMC

THE ROOTS

PHRENOLOGY ★★★★★

MCA

➤➤ THE PSEUDOSCIENCE of phrenology claims that your essential personality can be "read" by feeling the bumps on your head, as if they were a kind of fingerprint of the brain. Everything is pre-determined at birth, phrenologists say. But on *Phrenology*, their fifth and best CD, the Roots prove that wherever we start, we can still boldly change our course.

This bohemian Philadelphia hip-hop crew, renowned for their great, tradition-soaked live funk performances, have received almost as much credit for what they're not: gangstas, clichés or sample biters. Here, they clearly spell out their identity and mission — in songs that are both very personal ("Complexity," about a couple on the edge of romantic commitment) and as specific as the morning news ("Pussy Galore" skewers people who use sex to sell products).

From the thudding opening war chant, "Rock You," the Roots make great use of new guitarist Ben Kenney. (They were turned on to rock, drummer Amir "Questlove" Thompson recently quipped, "while we spent countless hours in front of MTV waiting for the one black video

to come on.") And they do a great job of casting, too, calling in cameos from take-no-mess R&B naturalist Jill Scott, underground Brooklyn rapper Talib Kweli, freakadelic black rocker Cody Chesnutt and even Amiri Baraka, the one living poet who actually scares people.

The first single, "Break You Off," featuring Philly neosoul singer Musiq, is a glowering tale of emotional push-and-pull that's half hip-hop and half Marvin Gaye — and that's before it flows into an arcing, orchestrated second section. The Roots are confident enough to follow soul music like that with the freaky soundscape "Water," which plinks and plunks around in the urban darkness like Tom Waits let loose in the ghetto.

The Roots used to be the great what-ifs of hip-hop — symbols of the thoughtful road not taken by the commercial rap masses. Suddenly, they can fulfill nearly all of their sweeping ambition to resuscitate soul's past. *Phrenology* is a celebration of self-determination, a nonstop joyride through some very complicated brains. *RJ SMITH*

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THE GUIDE NEW RELEASES

➤ Saliva boast about how
 great it is to be them
 — two tour buses!



BACK IN BLACK

Memphis band solidifies its grip on hard rock done softly

SALIVA

BACK INTO YOUR SYSTEM

★★

ISLAND

➤➤ CUT FROM THE same radio-friendly cloth as soft hard-rockers Nickelback, Saliva specialize in the sort of generic power ballads Chad Kroeger's influential MOR crew mastered. Indeed, Saliva's avuncular frontman, Josey Scott, collaborated with Kroeger on "Hero," the power-ballad hit from *Spider-Man* (in the video, Scott's the other guitarist with the beard).

"Always," the first single from *Back Into Your System*, follows the trusty template: acoustic self-pity building to an angsty, head-rocking chorus, then back to teary, third-act introspection. Elsewhere, the tepid "Rest in Pieces," written by Nikki Sixx, amply demonstrates why Mötley Crüe were better known for their drug intake than for their songwriting. Gaze at this mighty couplet: "My depth perception must be off again/'Cause this hurts deeper than I thought it did."

Away from the lighter waving, the proceedings are no less derivative. "Raise Up" is the traditional

boisterous hair-metal rallying cry, fused with a blowhard boast list of just how great it is to be in Saliva (two tour buses!). The lumpen "Weight of the World" sees Scott gamely having a go at "breaking it down," though the bullish "Superstar II" seems to be something of a dis song aimed at rap-rock — "No crying-ass bitching about my evil parents/They did their best to raise their only son." Take that, nü-metal!

Back Into Your System feels like an album written by headbangers kicking it back a few notches to get some of that sweet post-grunge platinum, and to that end it succeeds — it's pained, anthemic and a little edgy, though never too raw to scare away the important female demographic. Sure, Saliva look like a defiantly unattractive, "real" bunch of tattooed longhairs; you can imagine them chugging tequila with Pantera. But at their core, they're Bon Jovi without the hair and makeup budget. **BEN MITCHELL**

JOSEY SCOTT'S
 CURRENT LISTENING

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PROJECT PAT
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that he can sound at home jumping all over the pop, rock and country maps.

MATT ASHARE

OURS

PRECIOUS ★★★

DREAMWORKS

Second album from poetic rock peacocks

Titling their leadoff song "Kill the Band" may be tempting fate, but it's hard to fault the musical commitment of earnest New Jerseyan Jimmy Gnecco and his group. As evidenced by their debut, 2001's *Distorted Lullabies*, Gnecco's winsome yodel is straight out of the Jeff Buckley handbook, and he's skilled at creating a similar kind of drama-queen rock. Still, for all their airs and graces, taking a more blunt approach actually suits them better — "Realize" is first-rate radio fodder, and they give Lou Reed's "Femme Fatale" a similarly direct treatment. Both impress more than any of Gnecco's dying-swan routines. Less art, more rock, please.

KELLY ROYCE

LAURA PAUSINI

FROM THE INSIDE ★★

ATLANTIC

European star fails to get her American pop visa

This Italian pop singer has gained international status thanks to a gift for languages: releasing her albums simultaneously in her native tongue as well as in Spanish and, more recently, Portuguese. Her fluency is evident on her first English-language release: Her vocals are as unaccented as if she were raised in Connecticut. If only her producers and songwriters were as good as her voice coach. The arrangements are ploddingly pedestrian and the tunes straight from the elevator. With those weaknesses, her singing has to pull the plow. And Pausini's pipes, while pleasant, are hardly spectacular. Even on the best tracks — "I Need Love" and "It's Not Goodbye" —

The Pretenders' Chrissie Hynde, in a rare good mood



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SUSAN SARANDON
MRS. TIM ROBBINS,
STAR OF THE
BANGER SISTERS

I LOVE THIS CD



NELLY NELLYVILLE
FO' REEL/UNIVERSAL

"I know it's hard to believe, but I'm a big fan of Nelly. It's great to play around the house when I'm cleaning."

she sounds like a dull Celine Dion. All right, a *duller* Celine Dion.

DAVID HILTBRAND

PRETENDERS

LOOSE SCREW ★★★★★

ARTEMIS

Old new-wavers can still bite like a pit bull on eighth album in 25 years

Last in the news for being arrested while protesting against the Gap, Pretenders leader Chrissie Hynde may be better known for her animal-rights campaigning than for her substantial musical accomplishments. Nonetheless, the surly rumble of *Loose Screw*'s opening track, "Lie to Me," announces the return of her punky attitude and pungent songwriting. Buffed to a shine by British dance producers Bacon and Quarmby, this is slick, snarky pop with flashes of brilliance. The reggae lode of "Complex Person" skewers a needy celebrity ("I'll do anything to make you adore me") who might even be Hynde herself, and "Walk Like a Panther," a blackly comic midlife-crisis narrative written by Pulp's Jarvis Cocker, is delivered with exactly the right amount of wry defiance.

DORIAN LYNKEY

PRIMAL SCREAM

EVIL HEAT ★★★

EPIC

Lucky seventh outing for British sonic experimenters

Like a retirement home for British indie rockers, the current Primal Scream lineup includes ex-Stone Roses bassist Mani and former My Bloody Valentine nabob Kevin Shields, while *Evil Heat* also features contributions from Jesus and Mary Chain's Jim Reid and, less predictably, Robert Plant. What could have been an awful mess is, instead, a glorious mess, as the core Screamers continue their mission to explore Stooges-inspired →

ASTONISHING FACT! >>

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STUCK ON REPEAT

Grammy-scooping guitar virtuoso returns with a bunch of young new pals

SANTANA

SHAMAN ♦♦

ARISTA

➤➤ AT AGE 55, Carlos Santana is the oldest superstar on MTV following a resurrection so unlikely, it should've involved 12 disciples and a cross. In the early '90s, when he gave his records astral titles like *Spirits Dancing in the Flesh*, Santana seemed like another spent '60s experiment: a terrific guitarist content to putter around in ever-decreasing circles until his fingers dropped off.

Now, he's hotter even than during the post-Woodstock, Latin-rock prime of "Evil Ways" and "Black Magic Woman." Helped by the master matchmaking of then-Arista label chief Clive Davis, 1999's *Supernatural* turned platinum 14 times over and pocketed a record-breaking eight Grammy awards. So: how to follow that?

To nobody's surprise, the answer is: same again, maestro. Santana, who carries on dialogues with angels, may be more spiritually advanced than most, but he recognizes a good formula, and he has always relied on a shifting cast of singers. Like last time, he has enlisted a bunch of young talents,

some compatible and others not. Again, he plays special guest on his own album, cramming his trademark guitar wail into every possible crevice.

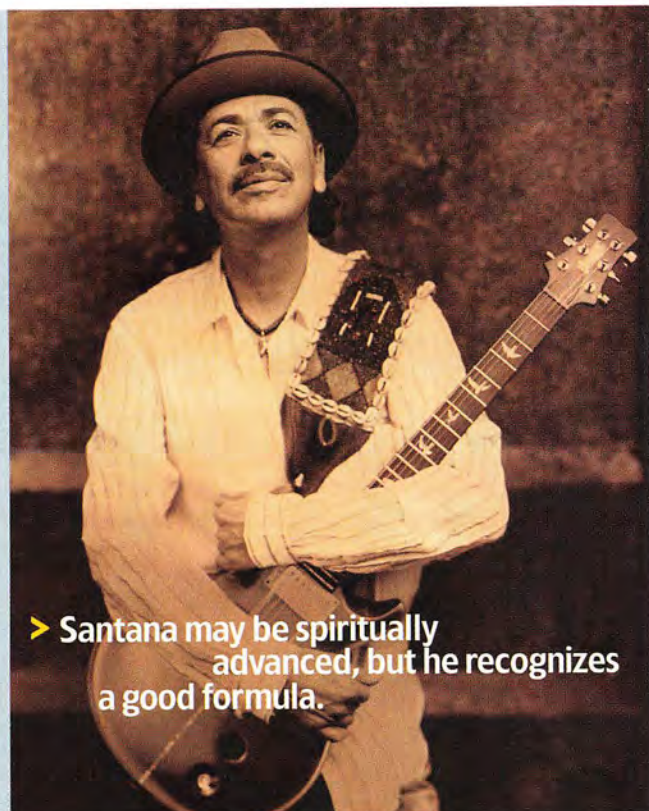
His sole criterion for collaboration seems to have been popularity: Nickelback's growly Chad Kroeger, soul men Musiq and Seal, Macy Gray (in flighty Latin mode) and Dido (doing her trippy-lite thing on "Feels Like Fire") don't leave any lasting impression, and Spanish opera giant Plácido Domingo leaves a bad impression. On a happier note, "The Game of Love" is effervescent pop, courtesy of Michelle Branch; rap-metal merchants P.O.D. shout amiably on "America"; and collegiate hip-hopper Citizen Cope is striking on the bluesy "Sideways."

So while there's no lack of diversity over *Shaman's* 70-plus minutes, that's also its undoing: It doesn't hang together. A variety show is fine, as long as there's a star as likeable as "Smooth" or "Maria Maria." PETER KANE

CARLOS SANTANA'S CURRENT LISTENING

➤ ARETHA FRANKLIN
LADY SOUL RHINO

➤ IKE AND TINA TURNER
PROUD MARY: THE VERY BEST OF EMI



➤ Santana may be spiritually advanced, but he recognizes a good formula.

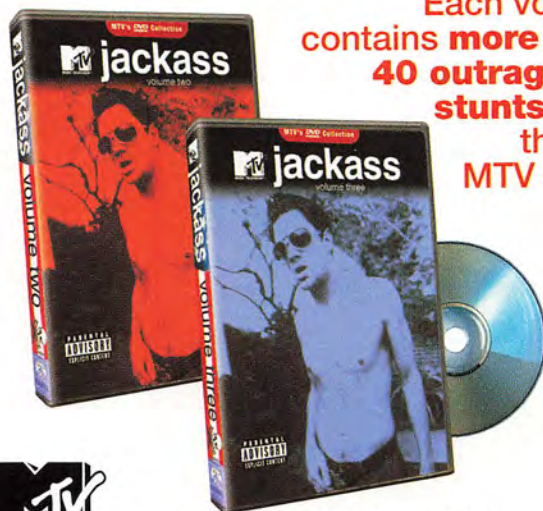
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garage mayhem ("Rise" and the glorious "Skull X") as well as the electronica/dub-rock they pioneered on their 1991 masterpiece, *Screamadelica* ("Autobahn 66," "A Scanner Darkly"). Even the recruitment of Kate Moss for a revamp of the old Lee Hazelwood-Nancy Sinatra tune "Some Velvet Morning" doesn't seem overly weird — the supermodel's vocals here are no more or less shaky than those of lead singer Bobby Gillespie.

CLARK COLLIS

THE RAVEONETTES

WHIP IT ON ★★★★★

CRUNCHY FROG

Danish garage-rockers turn a heavy-lidded eye to a world of deviant sex and casual violence

Although the Raveonettes are certain to be lumped in with the garage-rock revival, their eight-song debut feels less like the Stooges redux than it does an irritable Velvet Underground after a sleepless, week-long acid-and-coffee binge. The combination of guitarist Sune Rose Wagner and bassist Sharin Foo's voices sounds positively ghostly, swirling over hazy blasts of fuzz-toned guitar noise and deep, thumping grooves. Whether offering memorable refrains like "beating that ass with the chain gang of love," on "Veronica Fever," or snarling a defiant "Fuck you!" to cap the furious "Cops on Our Tail," the Raveonettes dirty up the howls of bands like the White Stripes and the Hives. Denmark must have some sleazy, brawl-ridden roadhouses.

DAVID PEISNER

ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT

LIVE FROM CAMP X-RAY ★★★★★

VAGRANT

Veteran garage punks out of San Diego go to war

This isn't a live album, and it wasn't recorded anywhere near Camp X-Ray, the United States' detention center in Cuba. Still, the title of *Rocket From the Crypt*'s seventh album makes some sense. It's not so much an album as it is a vigorous, full-frontal assault of muscular guitar riffs, combative horn blasts and snarling political diatribes harkening back to when punk rock was about something besides the girl who ignores you in homeroom. The blistering stomps "I'm Not Invisible" and "Outsider" are preoccupied by war, while "Bucket of Piss" is a raging ode to →

ASTONISHING FACT! >>

In 2000, CARLOS SANTANA's birthplace, Atlán de Navarro, Mexico, announced plans to erect a statue of him.



Sum 41 give one another "stink-palms."

CANDY STRIPES

Juvenile metal dorks grow up, just a bit

SUM 41

DOES THIS LOOK INFECTED? ★★★★★

ISLAND

ONCE POP-PUNKS hit it big, they stash their musical spitballs and ask to be taken seriously — kind of. This model of maturation was set by Green Day, who followed 1994's *Dookie* (★★★★★) (sales of 10 million) with the more serious *Insomniac*. It was then emulated by Blink-182, who followed their breakout record with 2001's *Take Off Your Pants and Jacket* — which included the divorce song "Stay Together for the Kids" and was as serious as a record named for a third-grade masturbation joke can be.

Now, despite their new album's schoolyard gross-out title, Sum 41 — champions of wry self-deprecation, good times and beer, beer, beer — have gone a little more serious for *Does This Look Infected?*

That's not to say the four Canadians take themselves seriously — not at all. Just as Blink's onstage bestiality banter doesn't prevent them from connecting with fans through common experiences, Sum 41 horse around while being more than just a party band. Indeed, while their breakthrough single, "Fat Lip," was a glorious, Beasties-informed garage rock-out, the sound here is more Disaffected Youth as

Interpreted by Iron Maiden: Amid the pounding kick drum and relentless fretboard chops, guitarist Dave Baksh's soloing is unashamed and glorious — doubly gratifying given that other rock bands frown on such old-school showboating in favor of chucking in some third-rate DJ turntable breaks.

Lyrical, the angst is fairly hazy. There's general talk of "boredom," "problems," "hypocrisy" and other adolescent complaints, though the punchy "Asshole" ("You're an asshole... You make me sick") is far less ambiguous. Elsewhere, "Thanks for Nothing" ("I can't bring myself to do what you want me to/This is who we are, and nothing's going to change") tells fans that it's OK to let their freak flags fly, and the reassurance of "My Direction" ("I just know that life's not so bad") sends them home with optimism in their hearts as well as a persistent ringing in their ears.

So Sum 41 have grown up... a little. Don't worry, though: As evidenced by the Strokes-baiting video for the album's first single, "Still Waiting," it's all relative, and, crucially, it still rocks. Now who's got the bottle opener? BEN MITCHELL

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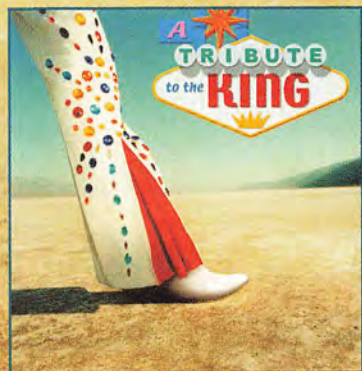
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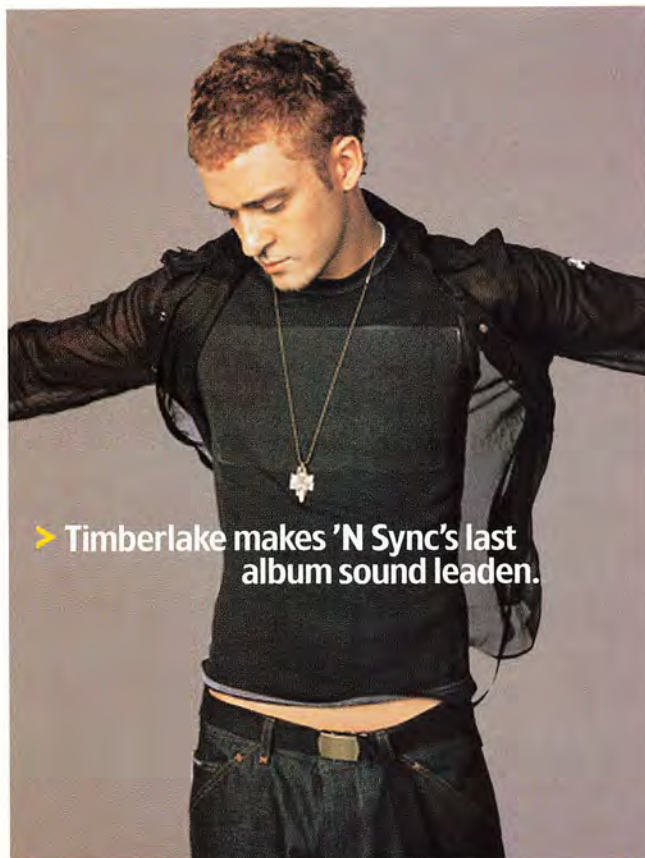


IN STORES
OCTOBER 22ND

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BORDERS



➤ Timberlake makes 'N Sync's last album sound leaden.

FLYING SOLO

Without 'N Sync or Britney, Timberlake shows his charisma

JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE

JUSTIFIED ★★★

JIVE

➤➤ ALTHOUGH LANCE BASS has become a late-night punch line for wanting to be pop's first astronaut, his 'N Sync bandmate Justin Timberlake's dream of solo success is even more improbable. If you lined up all the boy-band members who have had failed solo careers, you'd have — well, a very long line. Yes, Jermaine Jackson, Ralph Tresvant, Jordan Knight and Chico DeBarge, we're thinking of you.

Then again, to paraphrase Michael Jackson, Timberlake is not like other guys: He clearly has the most talent and charisma of the lot. Underscoring his love for black music, he seeks assistance from ruling pop producers the Neptunes (employed by Britney Spears last year), who could secure Carrot Top a place atop the charts if they wanted. Further behind-the-console assistance comes from Timbaland and Brian McKnight, the latter handling the album's climactic strings-assisted ballad, "Never Again."

But it's the Neptunes' clattering, state-of-the-art production on the album-opening "Señorita" and the first single, "Like I Love You," that most distinguishes *Justified* from Timberlake's band, making 'N Sync's 2001 release, *Celebrity*, sound positively leaden and outdated.

Unlike some other singers, Timberlake never seems a puppet of his hot producers. In control of his own chameleon-esque vocals, he also cowrote every track, contrasting tempo music tricks with retro-pop that recalls Prince, Stevie Wonder and, most obviously, *Thriller*-era Jackson — a play that fails only on the near-incestuous-sounding Janet Jackson duet, "(And She Said) Take Me Now." True, there are some atrocious lyrics: Even Bass would roll his eyes at "I wanna be your sky/So blue and high!" But it seems that Timberlake, after all, will become the first 'N Syncer to go stellar. CLARK COLLIS

JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE'S
CURRENT LISTENING

COLDPLAY
A RUSH OF BLOOD TO THE HEAD CAPITOL
CLIPSE
LORD WILLIN' STAR TRAK/ARISTA

the soul-sucking misery of under-employment. It's all over in 28 breathless minutes, long before the energy can flag.

DAVID PEISNER

ERICK SERMON

REACT ★★★

J RECORDS

On fourth solo album, hip-hop elder praises God and himself — though not in that order

Erick Sermon first earned a name in the late '80s as half of EPMD, the Long Island underground rap duo, but he's now best known for "Music," the 2001 comeback single in which he sampled Marvin Gaye. Here, a typically soulful Al Green helps out on the anti-player-hating anthem "Love Izz," but most of *React* is less polite and more funky: Bouncy beats come with electro squibs and guitar lines attached, and Sermon alternates boasts about his rhyming skill with descriptions of his spiritual enlightenment. Prime cameos from Redman (on the Just Blaze-produced title track, which funkifies a Bollywood track à la Truth Hurts's "Addictive") and Ghostface Killah ("On the Air") come to the rescue, just when Sermon's congested monotone starts to get old.

CHRISTIAN HOARD

BILLY JOE SHAVER

FREEDOM'S CHILD ★★★★★

COMPADRE

Texas songwriter, covered by Elvis Presley, the Allmans and Waylon Jennings, mourns his son's death

Few musicians evoke both pain and pleasure more deeply than Billy Joe Shaver, arguably Texas's top country singer-songwriter of the last quarter-century. The former derives from the heroin death a year ago of his guitarist son, Eddy, and the latter from his open-ended brand of Christian faith and wonder. This contemporary hobo music has a much softer, more acoustic feel than his last few hard-rocking albums with Eddy, under the group name Shaver, but Billy Joe, 63, still knows his way around a crunching riff ("Freedom Day"). His sense of loss and redemption, so heartbreaking on "Day by Day," even turns hilarious on "That's What She Said Last Night."

JOHN MORTLAND

SIMIAN

WE ARE YOUR FRIENDS

★★★★★

ASTRALWERKS

Ethereal East London quartet makes sublime set with added swagger

When Brian Eno cold-calls offering to work on your new album, you must be

doing something interesting. Maybe it's Simian's penchant for Victorian garb or their recently launched spoof religion, the Church of Simian. More likely, Eno, like others, was snared by Simian's 2001 debut, *Chemistry Is What We Are* — a beguiling mix of experimental pop, acoustic whimsy and electronica. This time around, James Ford, Simon Lord, Jas Shaw and Alex Macnaghten are still cute, but they've toughened up considerably; hooks go for the jugular and harmonies soar. Comparisons insult them, frankly, but the flagship single, "Never Be Alone," exists somewhere between the icy techno of Depeche Mode and the delicacy of Belle and



Snoop Dogg counts: "One, two, four..."

Sebastian. Simian, it seems, are going subtly, gorgeously ape.

STUART MACONIE

SNOOP DOGG

PAID THA COST TO BE DA BOSS ★★★★★

PRIORITY/CAPITOL

Old Dogg's sixth record says no to drugs, yes to cold hard pimpin'

Snoop Dogg says he's given up weed, but he hasn't forsaken the pimp-and-hustler fantasies he's lived for years. On his sixth solo album, Snoop is still a loquacious street raconteur, toasting the virtues of women ("Hourglass"), power ("Ballin'") and, well, himself ("The One & Only"). While the production wizardry of Dr. Dre is absent, it almost doesn't matter: On "Beautiful," Snoop wraps his cashmere voice around the skeletal jig of the Neptunes, while Jay-Z turns "Lollipop" into a cooing '70s sex rap. He may still ache for the herb ("I Miss That Bitch"), but not since his debut has the Doggfather been any higher.

JOSEPH PATEL

TAPROOT

WELCOME ★★

VELVET HAMMER/ATLANTIC

Michigan foursome tries, fails to subvert nü-metal cliché

Taproot would like to be famous for their massive drill-press sound, rather than for feuding with Fred Durst about not signing with his label. *Gift*, their slightly bland 2000 major-label debut, never distinguished itself in a sea of nü-metal sharks. On *Welcome*, they expand the range of their Sheetrock roar. Singer Stephen Richards has begun playing guitar, and his riffs thicken the already meaty sound — he and guitarist Mike DeWolf make one thunderous couple. But Taproot still can't punch through (or refine) their compulsively generic angst. Per nü-metal tradition, Richards howls →

ASTONISHING FACT! >>

In second grade, JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE hacked off his curls after bullies called him "Brillo Pad."

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LIFE AFTER DEATH

R&B superstars lose a member but don't turn sentimental

TLC

3D ★★★★★

LAFACE/ARISTA

▶ WHEN TLC NAMED their 1995 breakthrough record *CrazySexyCool*, they were distinguishing the three members' distinct personalities: Tionne "T-Boz" Watkins was Cool, Rozonda "Chilli" Thomas was Sexy and fire-starter Lisa "Left Eye" Lopes was Crazy. A similar idea is fundamental to the title Lopes devised for their fourth album. "Three girls, three styles, three personalities," they announce. Except, of course, now there are only two.

The surprising thing is, if you had spent the last 12 months in a sound-proof bunker, you wouldn't know Lopes died in a car accident last April in Honduras. There are no grimly prophetic lyrics from the late rapper or lip-quivering lamentations from her colleagues. Lopes wasn't the Notorious B.I.G. — death wasn't part of her repertoire — and this isn't "I'll Be Missing You." TLC set out to make a wise, sassy, modern soul record, and, despite the intervening events, they have succeeded.

Since TLC's 1999 album, *Fanmail*, Destiny's Child have snatched away the all-girl crown, and 3D commences with the unmistakable sound of stakes being raised, in the shape of the title



TLC: group hug!

track's Dallas Austin-produced neo-drum & bass thunder. Wrapping pulverizing beats straight out of OutKast's "B.O.B." in TLC's harmonies, it confirms the group's talent for stamping disparate production styles (including those of the Neptunes, Rodney Jerkins and Organized Noise) with their own identity.

Equally impressive are "Dirty," a feverish Missy Elliott-and-Timbaland number, and "Quickie," in which Lopes (who graces five tracks) taunts a date who can't deliver the goods: "You need some ginseng for your ping-pong, so we could do it!"

To find 3D's emotional center, skip straight to "Turntable." An "Unpretty"-style guitar-driven ballad about coping with bad fortune, it offers clear-eyed resilience rather than morbid sentimentality, and thus sums up the whole album. 3D's sheer creative vibrancy is itself testament to Lopes's live-wire charisma. DORIAN LYNKEY

TLC'S CURRENT LISTENING

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NELLYVILLE F/REEL/UNIVERSAL
EVE
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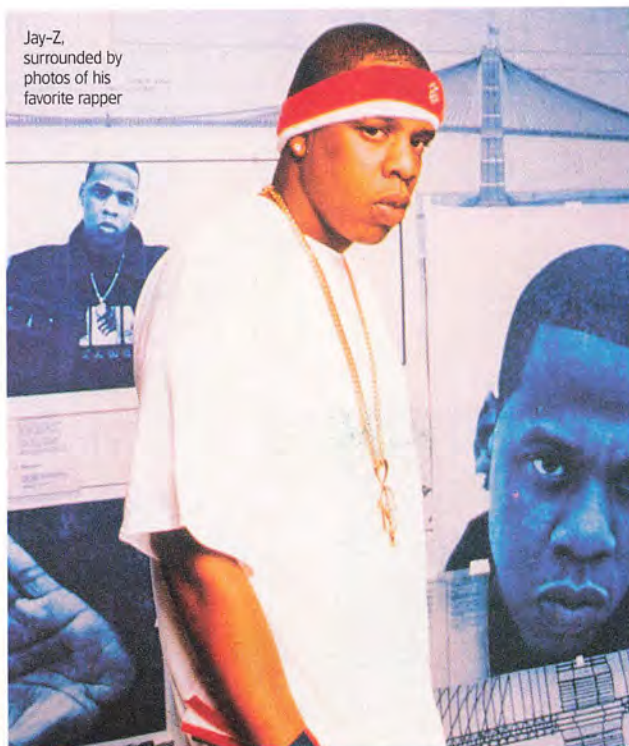


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THE GUIDE NEW RELEASES

Jay-Z, surrounded by photos of his favorite rapper



SELF-LOVE

Rap's king says he's the best — then proves it

JAY-Z

THE BLUEPRINT II: THE GIFT AND THE CURSE ★★★

ROCK-A-FELLA/DEF JAM

>>> YOU'VE GOT TO admire Jay-Z's chutzpah. Having to follow up last year's universally lauded, 2 million-selling *The Blueprint* has only made him more audacious. Jay-Hova's third album in just over a year is anything but timid: a concept-driven double CD with a whopping 25 tracks on which he all but declares himself the heir to slain rap heroes the Notorious B.I.G. and Tupac Shakur.

Of course, chasing Big and Pac's status can get thorny: It proves troublesome on "'03 Bonnie and Clyde," a bland rewrite of Pac's "Me and My Girlfriend" featuring a whispery Beyoncé Knowles, and surreal on "A Dream," which samples an entire Biggie verse. Fortunately, Jay-Z's daring is matched by his talent.

Inspired by the joy-and-pain dichotomy within Big and Pac's work, *Blueprint II* offers a *Gift* disc that flows among celebratory numbers such as the Neptunes-produced mack anthem "Excuse Me Miss," the irresistible, reggae-tinged "What They Gonna Do" and the monumental posse bonanza "The Watcher 2," with Dr. Dre and Rakim.

Meanwhile, *Curse* presents darker fare: the vindictive, "Me Against the World"-themed "Some People Hate," the mournful "A Ballad for the Fallen Soldier" and "Diamonds Is Forever," on which he agitatedly addresses a New York co-op board's refusal to allow him to buy into its luxury building earlier this year, threatening, "Don't make me bring Sharpton in it!"

Ultimately, *Blueprint II* excels when Jay-Z stops trying to measure up to lost legends, or to experiment with Lenny Kravitz on the rock-rap dud "Guns & Roses." Despite the endurance test inherent in any double disc, his Olympian performances are worth the weight of his pretensions. No one else can trade furious, triple-time rhymes with OutKast's Big Boi ("Poppin' Tags"), cut down emulators over a Paul Anka (!) sample ("I Did It My Way") and pop one-liners like "Real recognize real, and you look unfamiliar" ("All Around the World"). On *Blueprint II*, he displays the skills (and the nerve) to defy at least one tried-and-true tenet: Not all sequels suck. **CHAIRMAN MAO**

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE!

>>> THE NOTORIOUS B.I.G. LIFE AFTER DEATH BAD BOY

>>> MEMPHIS BLEEK THE UNDERSTANDING ROCK-A-FELLA

about pain he's felt and dreams that haunt him on "Poem." And the band still splits the difference between alt-rock's chest-beating and alt-metal's chunky dynamism, a fusion that's all the rage in heavy rage music.

JOE GROSS

TOO \$HORT

WHAT'S MY FAVORITE WORD? ★★

JIVE

Hip-hop iron man, formerly of Oakland, wants your vital organs

Like James Brown's hair, Too \$hort doesn't change much with age. On his fourteenth album, he continues to recycle the *Iceberg Slim for Dummies* methodology he pioneered in the '80s: blunt rhymes about pimping, biatches, upholstered with cushy bass and vintage, quiet-storm keyboard. It's journeyman's work, but it has moments, such as "The Movie," where the slow, nodding tempo creates a pleasant narcotic effect. And occasionally Too \$hort can surprise you with a line of pure and simple poetry: "Unconditional love — would you donate your kidneys? I wanna know

how much would you give me." Not a kid, but maybe another listen.

G. BEATO

TOTO

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS ★

EMI

After 25 million records sold, this L.A. supergroup announces: We so funky!

When you think of Bob Marley and Stevie Wonder, the first name that comes to mind is Toto. OK, maybe not. Even fans of these highly dexterous musical masons know that "Hold the Line," their 1978 karaoke classic, was as sleek as chrome and twice as tacky. On an album they claim honors their inspirations, Toto cover '60s and '70s hits: "Could You Be Loved" and an overblown "Living for the City," plus songs by Elton John and Elvis Costello, whose influence on Toto will surely baffle future scholars. Toto nullify the pleasure from these pop classics by making them pompous, and with Bobby Kimball's graceless white-blues roar, they sound like the band at an overpriced Miami Beach wedding.

ROB TANNENBAUM

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The best new releases of the last three months



THE DONNAS

SPEND THE NIGHT

ATLANTIC

The female offspring of Mötley Crüe and the Ramones, these Cali lasses stock their fifth album with mean punk licks and boy-baiting jibes.



SIGUR RÓS

()

FATCAT/MCA

With the most pretentiously elusive song titles in rock history, this Icelandic foursome creates gliding, mournful soundscapes that meander beautifully from slow to slower.



FOO FIGHTERS

ONE BY ONE

RCA

After drumming for Queens of the Stone Age, Dave Grohl borrows their hard-rock ferocity, offsetting sanguine pop with metal tooth-grinders.



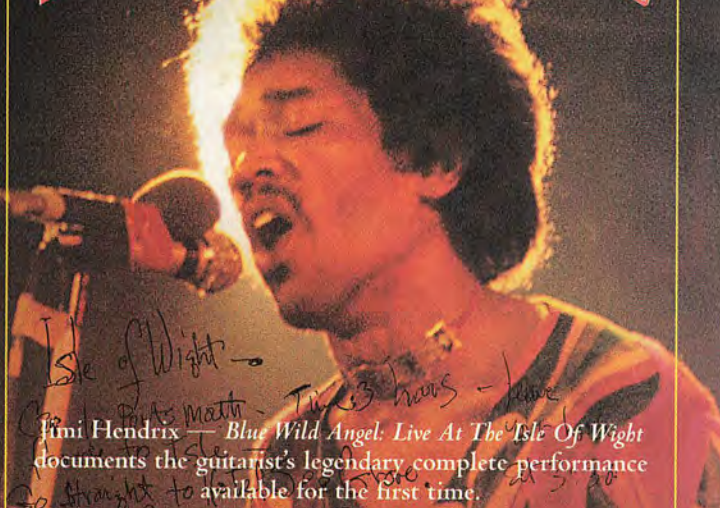
JURASSIC 5

POWER IN NUMBERS

INTERSCOPE

With "What's Golden" — a bumpin' shout-out to the old school — the second release from this L.A. rap sextet features call-and-response rhymes and inventive turntable tweaking.

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MOST POPULAR SONGS IN AMERICA

He may be less wholesome than Kelly Clarkson, but Eminem proves who's the real American idol

1 EMINEM

"LOSE YOURSELF"
8 MILE ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK

With his Curtis Hanson-directed biopic, *8 Mile*, already dubbed the hip-hop *Citizen Kane*, Eminem continues to dominate pop culture in 2002. "Lose Yourself" is the lead single off the surefire *8 Mile* soundtrack — featuring unreleased Jay-Z, Nas and 50 Cent tracks — and is duking it out with *The Eminem Show*'s "Cleaning Out My Closet" on the pop and R&B charts.

HOW WE DID IT >>>>

The Most Popular Songs chart is based on radio and video airplay, and album sales. Provided by HITSDailyDouble.com: "Proof that any idiot in the music business can have a Web site."



POSITION	TITLE	ARTIST	ALBUM/LABEL
1	"LOSE YOURSELF"	EMINEM	8 MILE ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK SHADY/AFTERMATH/INTERSCOPE
2	"I'M GONNA GETCHA GOOD!"	SHANIA TWAIN	UP! MERCUY NASHVILLE
3	"SK8ER BOI"	AVRIL LAVIGNE	LET GO ARISTA
4	"COCHISE"	AUDIOSLAVE	AUDIOSLAVE EPIC/INTERSCOPE
5	"WORK IT"	MISSY ELLIOTT	UNDER CONSTRUCTION ARISTA
6	"THE GAME OF LOVE"	SANTANA FEATURING MICHELLE BRANCH	SHAMAN ARISTA
7	"A MOMENT LIKE THIS"	KELLY CLARKSON	AMERICAN IDOL: GREATEST MOMENTS RCA
8	"LIKE I LOVE YOU"	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	JUSTIFIED JIVE
9	"DISEASE"	MATCHBOX TWENTY	MORE THAN YOU THINK YOU ARE ATLANTIC
10	"LANDSLIDE"	DIXIE CHICKS	HOME OPEN WIDE/IMPULSE/COLUMBIA
11	"DIE ANOTHER DAY"	MADONNA	DIE ANOTHER DAY SOUNDTRACK WARNER BROS.
12	"GIRL TALK"	TLC	3D ARISTA
13	"JENNY FROM THE BLOCK"	JENNIFER LOPEZ	THIS IS ME... THEN EPIC
14	"I AM MINE"	PEARL JAM	RIOT ACT EPIC
15	"WHEN THE LAST TIME"	CLIPSE	LORD WILLIN' STAR TRAK/ARISTA
16	"THE ZEPHYR SONG"	RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS	BY THE WAY WARNER BROS.
17	"SHE HATES ME"	PUDDLE OF MUDD	COME CLEAN FLAWLESS/GEFFEN/INTERSCOPE
18	"ALL MY LIFE"	FOO FIGHTERS	ONE BY ONE RCA
19	"ALWAYS"	SALIVA	BACK INTO YOUR SYSTEM ISLAND
20	"DILEMMA"	NELLY FEATURING KELLY ROWLAND	NELLYVILLE FOX REEL/UNIVERSAL
21	"BABY"	ASHANTI	ASHANTI MURDER INC./DEF JAM
22	"UNDERNEATH IT ALL"	NO DOUBT	ROCK STEADY INTERSCOPE
23	"YOU KNOW YOU'RE RIGHT"	NIRVANA	NIRVANA GEFFEN
24	"STOLE"	KELLY ROWLAND	SIMPLY DEEP COLUMBIA
25	"'03 BONNIE & CLYDE"	JAY-Z FEATURING BEYONCE	THE BLUEPRINT II ROC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM
26	"FAMILY PORTRAIT"	PINK	MISSUNDAZTOOD ARISTA
27	"WHEN I'M GONE"	3 DOORS DOWN	AWAY FROM THE SUN REPUBLIC/UNIVERSAL
28	"FROM THA CHUUUCH TO DA PALACE"	SNOOP DOGG	PAID THA COST TO BE DA BOSS PRIORITY/CAPITOL
29	"NO ONE KNOWS"	QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE	SONGS FOR THE DEAF INTERSCOPE
30	"GIMME THE LIGHT"	SEAN PAUL	DUTTY ROCK VIRI/ATLANTIC
31	"PRAYER"	DISTURBED	BELIEVE REPRISE
32	"ELECTRICAL STORM"	U2	THE BEST OF 1990-2000 ISLAND/UNIVERSAL
33	"GRACE IS GONE"	DAVE MATTHEWS BAND	BUSTED STUFF RCA
34	"LUV U BETTER"	LL COOL J	TEN DEF JAM
35	"DON'T KNOW WHY"	NORAH JONES	COME AWAY WITH ME BLUE NOTE
36	"PO' FOLKS"	NAPPY ROOTS	WATERMELON, CHICKEN & GRITZ ATLANTIC
37	"THROUGH THE RAIN"	MARIAH CAREY	THROUGH THE RAIN MOJAVE/ISLAND
38	"HEY MA"	CAM'RON	COME HOME WITH ME ROC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM
39	"I'M STILL HERE"	JOHN RZEZNIK	TREASURE PLANET SOUNDTRACK WALT DISNEY/FOXWOOD
40	"LIFESTYLES OF THE RICH AND FAMOUS"	GOOD CHARLOTTE	THE YOUNG AND THE HOPELESS EPIC

2

SHANIA TWAIN

"I'M GONNA GETCHA GOOD!"

UP!

Five years after releasing the 19 million-selling *Come On Over*, crossover queen Twain comes down from her castle in

Switzerland and returns to a country landscape in which

every comparable female

artist is following her lead.

Produced by her husband,

überproducer Mutt Lange, the

new album, *Up!*, devotes one CD

each to pop and country versions of the same songs.

Twain will bare her multiplatinum midriff on the November

26 *Today Show*.



4

AUDIOSLAVE

"COCHISE"

AUDIOSLAVE

The most anticipated supergroup since Led Zeppelin was nearly derailed by interpersonal squabbles in March. But Chris Cornell and three-fourths of Rage Against the

Machine mended fences, and "Cochise,"

from their self-titled, Rick Rubin-produced

debut, is already laying waste to rock

and alternative radio.



8

JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE

"LIKE I LOVE YOU"

JUSTIFIED

Is there life after teen pop? If Justin Timberlake's debut single, "Like I Love You," is any indication, the answer is a resounding

yes: The Neptunes-

helmed, Jacko-esque

song is already rock-

eting up the charts,

and the Timbaland-

produced "Cry Me a

River" is set to follow.



13

JENNIFER LOPEZ

"JENNY FROM THE BLOCK"

THIS IS ME... THEN

The furiously multitasking Lopez is back with a new movie — *Maid in Manhattan* —

and her third album.

The lead single

features cameos

from Lox members

Jadakiss and Styles,

and picks up where

last year's breakout

hit with Ja Rule, "I'm

Real!" left off.

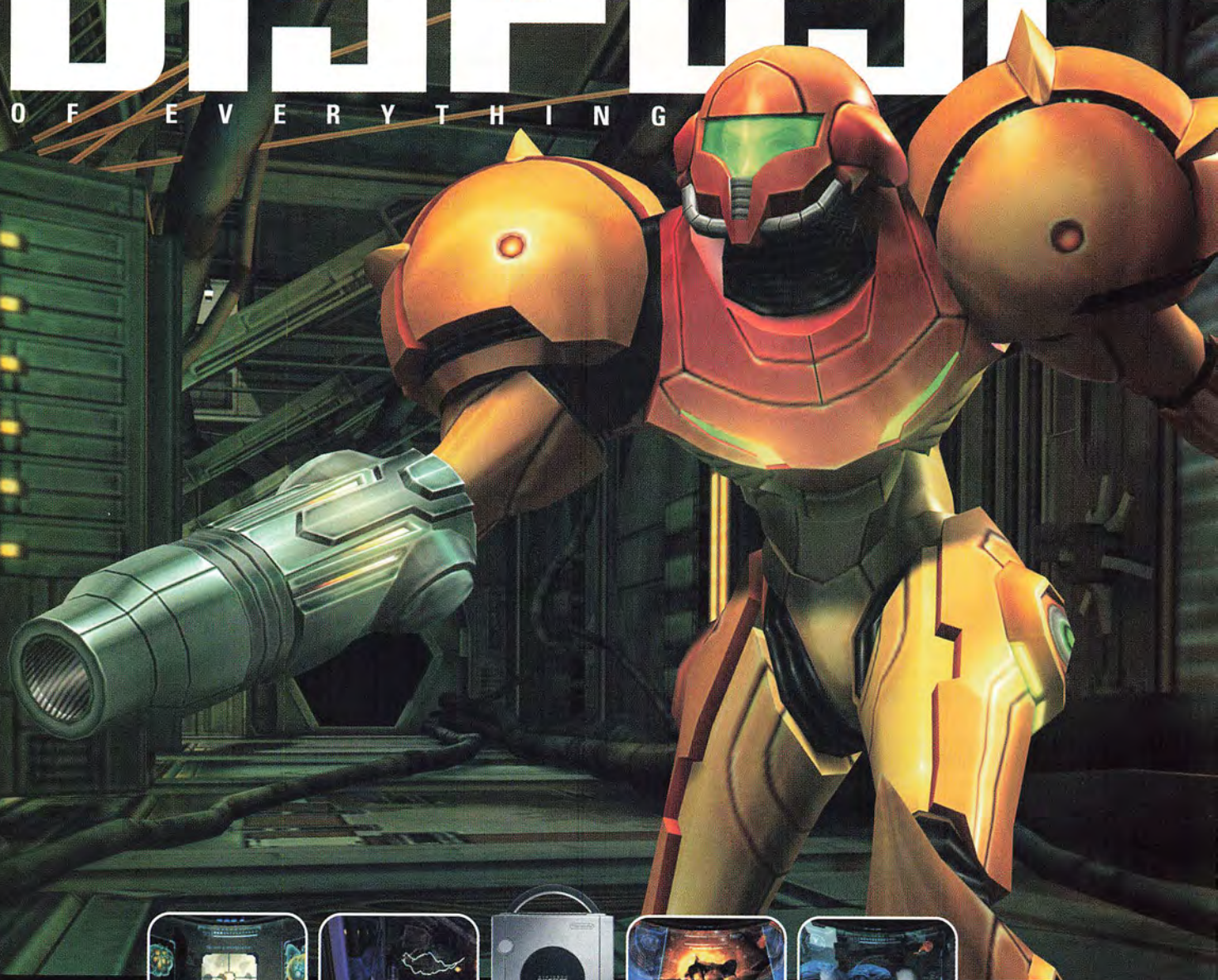


Madonna
"Will some-
body please
help me up!"

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DISPOSE

OF EVERYTHING



The four-mode visor. The morph ball. The freeze beam. The wave beam.



Evil must be exterminated. But first it must be found.



Violence

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Dark Vision

A decade after *Nevermind*, the first hits collection from the Seattle gargoyles who made hate beautiful is here

NIRVANA

NIRVANA

★★★★★

GEFFEN

NIRVANA KURT COBAIN would have hated this record, but by the end, he hated pretty much everything. He hated the hordes of meathead latecomer fans, who didn't get his unusually moral ideal of what music ought to be about, and who shoved sales of *Nevermind*, the band's second record, to 10 million. He hated the music business, for dragging his goof-around punk noise into a harsher spotlight than it could ever withstand. He hated the miserable relations between his friends in the band and his wife. And he hated himself for letting it all happen.

There have been other rock suicides, but maybe none who believed so devoutly that he had failed to measure up to his own impossible standards. Thoroughly dissected for his tastes in alternative culture and drugs, in the end Cobain was his own sternest judge.

A singles-heavy compilation featuring a sole bit of unreleased fan bait is, therefore, just about the least punk-rock epitaph you could imagine for Cobain. Rescued from tape-cupboard limbo, where it sat for the duration of Courtney Love's legal fight with Nirvana drummer

Dave Grohl and bassist Krist Novoselic, the "new" song, "You Know You're Right," opens this collection rather than closing it. This is about right — in early 1994, a few months before Cobain killed himself with a shotgun, the trio went into a Seattle studio to record some demos, but cut only one song.

Cobain was already coming apart, and the song is a companion piece at best. They had done the throat-wrenching scream, churning desperation and quiet/loud dynamic before, and better. Nirvana half-rocking, of course, surpasses most bands at their personal-crisis peaks. But the lyrics are indistinct, and the track lacks Nirvana's usual terrible clarity — the sense that something awful is happening within the song which you can't escape. "You Know You're Right" is merely an overture — no disgrace given the standard established by what follows.

Naturally, the Nirvana compilation is defined by what's left out. There's little of their knockabout, homeroom-Sabbath incarnation from the mostly ignored 1989 debut, *Bleach* (only "About a Girl," that album's Beatlesque, nocturnal standout, makes the cut), and no space for less-orthodox high points such as *Nevermind*'s stampeding "Breed" or *In Utero*'s hellish "Scentless Apprentice." What emerges instead is a stark picture of Cobain falling into the darkness

as his band rose to the top.

The *Nevermind* tracks need little reappraisal. "Smells Like Teen Spirit" and "Lithium" are still-unbeaten acmes of feel-good, feel-bad rock: rickety, rampaging purgatives of teenage misery and its traces in the adult mind. The swirling, inscrutable "Come as You Are" epitomizes Cobain's flip side: the curse of being intelligent, articulate and still sick, deep down in the soul.

It's the selections from *In Utero* — Nirvana's "scare the new fans" album and supposedly their major wrong turn — that really shine. There's "Heart-Shaped Box," the unbearably melancholy theme song of the Court-and-Kurtney love-in, and "Dumb" (essentially the Beatles' "Norwegian Wood" on heroin). Pleasingly, the Wal-Mart-infuriating "Rape Me" is here too, showing Nirvana growing more complicated and ambivalent.

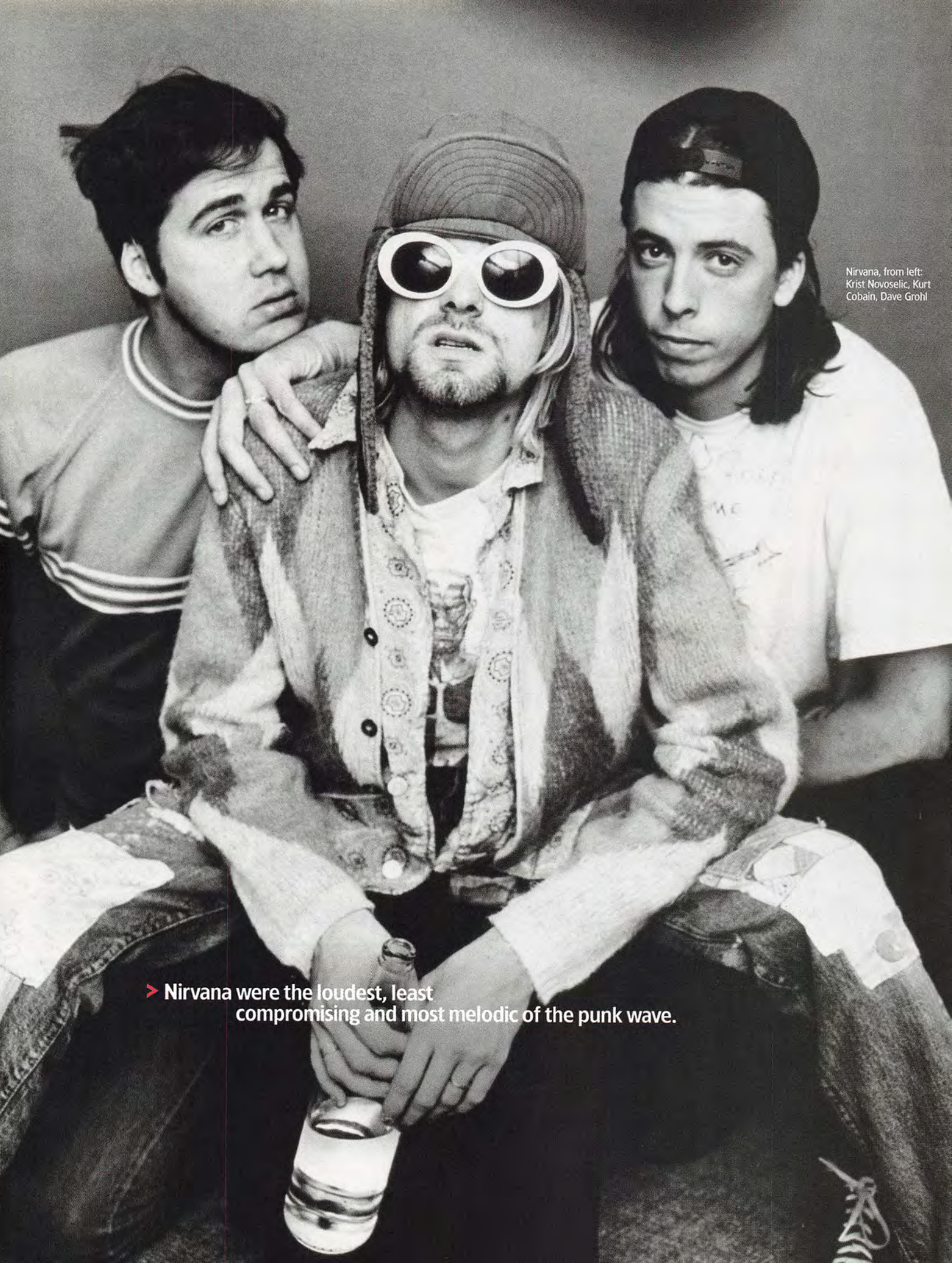
Eight years on, with Nirvana's sound enduring in a dozen lesser imitators, these fascinating songs show clearly what grungemania and the 24-hour Cobain Heroin Watch obscured: Nirvana were not only the loudest, least compromising and most melodic of the punk wave, they were also the most elusive. These are songs anyone under 40 can sing, but, heard anew, it's the strangest music imaginable. It's not just the car-crash fascination of hearing Cobain dump his damaged subconscious all over you, but the fact that Novoselic and Grohl do the same on bass and drums.

Inevitably, Cobain's grisly, fantastical lyrics offer a macabre fascination. Guns feature in "Teen Spirit," "In Bloom" and "Come as You Are," and "Lithium's" refrain "I'm not gonna crack" sounds sadder every time it repeats. But strangest of all, this splintered music proves uplifting. The greatest mystery is how Nirvana turned their anger and Cobain's lust for oblivion into something impossibly beautiful. They proved hatred isn't such a bad thing, until Cobain pointed it in the wrong direction. **STUART MUIRHEAD**



And to think Kurt was taking heroin to be more productive.

This page: Michel Levesque/Redferns/Retna Ltd. Opposite page: Jesse Friedman/Corbis Outlines



Nirvana, from left:
Krist Novoselic, Kurt
Cobain, Dave Grohl

> Nirvana were the loudest, least compromising and most melodic of the punk wave.

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THE GUIDE REISSUES

Björk: "Please address all questions to my publicist"



BJÖRK

FAMILY TREE ★★★

ELEKTRA

Another greatest-hits selection from the Icelandic warbler

October's fan-selected *Greatest Hits* was aimed at casual listeners, but *Family Tree* goes after committed Björkphiles. On this box set, Björk selects her own greatest hits as well as live selections recorded with the Brodsky Quartet (great), hard-to-find dance collaborations (not bad) and overlooked juvenilia — liable to make completists delirious and bewilder everyone else. Some fearful and seriously dated post-punk caterwauling emphasizes how much more enjoyable Björk became when she learned to harness her avant-garde leanings to something resembling a tune, and "Gloria," a flute composition written during her teens, sounds like the sound-



Jeff Buckley, unhatted

track to an arty early-'70s Eastern European cartoon.

ALEXIS PETRIDIS

JEFF BUCKLEY

THE GRACE EPs ★★★★★

COLUMBIA

Five EPs from improvisational heart-throb who drowned in 1997

Star-crossed troubadour Jeff Buckley knew how to go over the top in exquisite fashion. So it's fitting that this electrifying five-CD, 14-track compilation of various hard-to-find EPs includes three versions each of "Mojo Pin," "Grace" and "Dream Brother," and everything from a Hank Williams cover to an 11-minute space jam. A highlight is the rapturous *Live From the Bataclan* — the French audience gets so excited, it nearly stops the show. Were Buckley's extended, spontaneous live versions of his songs self-indulgent? Often. But they were also frequently ecstatic, with a magical abandon lacking in rock music today. One quibble: Where's his revelatory debut EP, *Live at Sin-é*?

MICHAEL AZERRAD

CAMPER VAN BEETHOVEN

CIGARETTES AND CARROT JUICE: THE SANTA CRUZ YEARS ★★★

SPINART

A big box of bitchin' tunes from David Lowery's pre-Cracker crew

This five-CD set recaptures the early days of Camper Van Beethoven, the audacious and hilarious late-'80s band that combined genre-blending music with a surreal sensibility, peer-mocking humor and slacker fronting. The set consists of CVB's first three albums (*Telephone Free Landslide Victory*, *II & III* and *Camper Van Beethoven*), a 1993 odd-and-sods disc (*Camper Van-tiquities*) and an unreleased live album (*Greatest Hits Played Faster*). Their uncategorizable periodic table of the elements included punky spontaneity, heartbreakingly naive cowboy-reggae ditties, dissonant psychedelia, dollar-bin folk-dance riffs and some of the niftiest college-radio hits of all time, notably "Take the Skinheads Bowling."

RICHARD GEHR

CARPENTERS

THE ESSENTIAL COLLECTION 1965-1997 ★★

THE MILLENNIUM COLLECTION ★★

A&M

Beloved brother/sister act whom Nixon invited to play the White House

Once considered the epitome of bland '70s pop, the Carpenters' sophis- →

THE SCORE >>

★★★★★

EXCELLENT. A MUST-HAVE

★★★★

GREAT. CHECK IT OUT

★★★

VERY GOOD IN ITS GENRE

★★

JUST OK

★

WEAK



➤ With the Rolling Thunder Revue, Dylan hoped to restore rock's lost mystery.

UNMASKED

Dylan's legendary '75 tour is finally released

BOB DYLAN

THE BOOTLEG SERIES
VOL. 5 — LIVE 1975:
THE ROLLING THUNDER
REVUE ★★★★★

COLUMBIA/LEGACY

➤➤ BOB DYLAN'S live peak is usually dated to 1966, when he charged around the world with the Band, freshly acquired electricity and a fair amount of chemical energy. But many Dylan connoisseurs stake a claim for the era of the Rolling Thunder Revue, the free-wheeling musical circus he convened in 1975, hoping to avenge rock's pre-punk bland-out and restore some of its lost mystery.

Up to now, the only official release from this period was *Hard Rain*, a ragged record of the Revue's oft-maligned second phase. These two discs collect tracks from its early maneuvers, in late 1975, when Dylan, his former girlfriend Joan Baez, the Byrds' Roger McGuinn and a full supporting cast of musicians — including *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* soundtrack producer T-Bone Burnett — tumbled around New England and Canada.

"The first half of that tour could arguably be said to be Dylan's best

ever," Burnett later reflected. "It was really spiritual and beautiful."

It's easy to hear what he meant. "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall" is re-invented as a caterwauling rock shuffle, "Isis" undergoes a similarly adrenalized makeover, and Dylan's solo treatment of "Mr. Tambourine Man" pumps new life into one of his hoariest songs. He even repeats the trick — aided by Baez — on the customarily yawn-inducing "Blowin' in the Wind."

Things are compromised only by a run of songs from *Desire* that sits in the middle of the second CD. Dylan used the Revue to showcase new material from that album, which was still a few weeks from release. But given his fondness for retooling songs until they can't be recognized, "Oh, Sister," "Hurricane," "One More Cup of Coffee" and "Sara" are disappointingly faithful to their recorded equivalents, especially when played in sequence.

Thankfully, the show ends with a delightful reading of "Knockin' on Heaven's Door," featuring rewritten lyrics and the Revue's beautifully rough-hewn music. This is Dylan's eighth live album, but it will cement Rolling Thunder's place in his legend: All told, only the drooled-over *Live 1966* is better. **JOHN HARRIS**

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THE GUIDE REISSUES

Elvis Costello
always knew
how to win a
staring contest.



ticated craftsmanship was saluted 10 years ago with a tribute album headlined by hipsters Sonic Youth and American Music Club. Siblings Karen (voice) and Richard (piano) were studio masters, using lush arrangements to frame her warm, personable singing on such glossy romantic hits as "(They Long to Be) Close to You" and "Rainy Days and Mondays." The charming "I'll Be Yours," with its girl-group roots, captures the Carpenters before they found a formula. But the four-disc *Essential* undercuts their strength as a singles act: In hefty doses, the meticulous production becomes predictable, while Karen's unvarying smoothness imparts a creepy edge. The single-disc *Millennium Collection*, a mix of hits and lesser-known songs chosen by Richard, offers a more digestible survey, including the brilliant "Goodbye to Love," which counters Karen's self-pity with soaring electric guitar, to exciting effect.

JON YOUNG

LEONARD COHEN

THE ESSENTIAL
LEONARD COHEN ★★★★★

COLUMBIA/LEGACY

Two-disc best-of from Montreal's
often-rejected poet of despair

The deep-voiced, slope-shouldered, wry soul that is Leonard Cohen's music today is a relatively recent invention. As this excellent compilation shows, the youthful Cohen specialized in acute, autobiographical ballads of misery, beginning with his 1968 debut, *Songs of Leonard Cohen*. "So Long, Marianne" details the end of his affair with Marianne Ihlen, and "Suzanne"

concerns his lust for long-term muse Suzanne Verdal. As he blossomed, so did his writing, but still he plumbed his soul — and on 1974's "Take This Longing" he was pining after being rejected by Velvet Underground calamity Nico. When his voice dropped, around 1979's *Recent Songs*, he embraced characters, such as the insane narrator of 1988's "First We Take Manhattan," and jollity (of sorts), as on 1992's "Closing Time." All that remains constant is his unremitting excellence.

JOHN AIZLEWOOD

ELVIS COSTELLO

ARMED FORCES ★★★★★

IMPERIAL BEDROOM ★★★★★

MIGHTY LIKE A ROSE ★★

RHINO

His best and his worst, both reissued
with more extra tracks than any non-
obsessives will find necessary

The rattling garage rock Elvis Costello
made with the Attractions peaks with



Leonard Cohen: genius and private eye

This page, from top: Patrick Rechin/Retna Ltd.; Harekoot/Sunshine/Retna Ltd.; Opposite page: Lynn Goldsmith/Corbis; Alphonse Teymonde (still-life)

1979's expressly political *Armed Forces*, best remembered for the propulsive pop of "Accidents Will Happen" and "Oliver's Army," and the lusty, confused confessions of "Party Girl," here paired with an extra CD of speedy live takes. Three years later, with the sprawling *Imperial Bedroom*, Costello redrew the blueprint to accommodate rococo studio experimentation. While time hasn't been kind to its reverb-heavy '80s (over)production, "Almost Blue" and "Man Out of Time" argue the case for



Miles Davis thinks, "I shoulda worn brown."

the "genius" plaudits thrown at it upon its release. *Mighty Like a Rose* (1991), his worst record, remains a hit-and-miss affair, highlighted only by the dark flip side of the California dream in "The Other Side of Summer" and two collaborations with Paul McCartney, including the bittersweet "So Like Candy," arguably one of the finest tunes either song master has ever written.

TOM DOYLE

MILES DAVIS

THE COMPLETE MILES DAVIS AT MONTREUX 1973-1991 ★★

COLUMBIA/LEGACY

Perishable fusion funk from a fearless jazz genius

The commonly held idea about Miles Davis, after he returned from a 1976-1980 hiatus, is that he was better live than on record. But this enormous box set doesn't prove the theory. The 20 discs, of every Davis performance at the Montreux festival in Switzerland, vary greatly; the evening performance of July 8, 1984, tops the afternoon set, offering the same songs with more aggression. The music is shallow and has dated badly. Much of it retains the single-chord funk or blues of his first

electric period (1969-1975) but trades dirt and density for pop-gloss covers of Michael Jackson and Cyndi Lauper, complete with trebly, distant sound. Disc 19 movingly re-creates some of Gil Evans's late-'50s arrangements, organized by Quincy Jones, but otherwise, this box is painful listening.

BEN RATLIFF

DJ QUIK

THE BEST OF DJ QUIK: DA FINALE ★★★

ARISTA

Jheri-curl'd pioneer from Compton keeps it gangsta but has little to say

Though DJ Quik is often cited as one of the originators of the West Coast's

much-maligned, thug-friendly G-funk style, the Compton native should instead be remembered for making some of the prettiest-sounding beats of the 1990s. Quik's sound — bouncy grooves, lush arrangements and plenty of talkbox — regurgitates its 1970s street funk influences well, especially on "Hand N Hand" and "Tonite."

Unfortunately, his evolution as a producer wasn't matched by great leaps as a rapper; as a result, his casual, unconvincing tone sabotages his keep-it-real 'hood tales. His most believable lyrical turn comes on the new cut "Streetz Is Callin'," on which he defends his use of an unclear sample for the recent Truth Hurts hit "Addictive." Now that's gangsta. →

HUA HSU

UNEARTHING LOST CLASSICS >>

WILCO

A.M. ★★★★★

REPRISE



Before Jeff Tweedy led Wilco through the ambitious sonic tapestries of *Yankee Hotel Foxtrot* this year, his band debuted in 1995 with the loose alt-country twang and breezy freedom of *A.M.* Worlds away from YHF's overwrought seriousness, and dotted with banjo, fiddle and mandolin, *A.M.*'s theme of heart-break hints at a developing depression in Tweedy's playfully morose lyrics.

STANDOUT TRACKS: "Casino Queen," "Box Full of Letters"

PETER LAURIA

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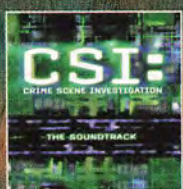
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THE GUIDE REISSUES



Iron Maiden, on their way to church

THE FALL

TOTALE'S TURNS (IT'S NOW OR NEVER) ★★★★★

GROTESQUE (AFTER THE GRAMME) ★★★

SLATES/A PART OF AMERICA THEREIN, 1981 ★★

PERVERTED BY LANGUAGE ★★★★★

TOTALLY WIRED: THE ROUGH TRADE ANTHOLOGY ★★★★★

SANCTUARY/CASTLE

Magnificently unlistenable early albums from England's weirdest band

As is often the case with worthwhile experiences, the Fall leave first-timers exhausted, seasick and a little degraded — to become a fan, you have to get past the pain barrier. A kind of idiot-savant, Tourette's-syndrome rock outfit from Salford (the Cleveland of England), the Fall are now 25 years and 40-plus albums into a career built on savage momentum and the ranting poetry of Mark E. Smith, a working-class Nostradamus. On *Grotesque* and the unremittingly lo-fi live *Totale's Turns* (both from 1980), Smith barks out Old Testament songs such as "Container Drivers" like a gin-sodden preacher. The compilation *Slates* combines studio and live takes to lesser impact, but by *Perverted by Language* (1983), their destiny as beloved, post-punk Ezra Pound art nightmare is in sight. Those without patience, stomach or shelf space should go for *Totally Wired*, which condenses the best of these albums into two semidigestible CDs. STUART MUIRHEAD

IRON MAIDEN

EDDIE'S ARCHIVE ★★★★★

PORTRAIT/COLUMBIA/LEGACY

Outtakes from metal mullet monsters

Months after reissuing their entire catalog, Iron Maiden continue to rummage in the closet. This time they've scavenged up three double CDs of sessions, B-sides and live tracks alongside a family tree, booklet and — hooray! — a shot glass fashioned as the head of the band's mascot, Eddie. And *Eddie's Archive* is packaged in a miniature casket, which means you won't mistake it for any other box set on your shelf. Musically, the only difference between Maiden in 1979 and now is the presence in the old lineup of willing amateur vocalist Paul Di'Anno, quickly fired — cheers! — because of his alcoholism. Bruce Dickinson replaced him, and Maiden delivered their battle cry ad nauseam for the next 20 years. Moments of silly genius ("Run to the Hills") explode like land mines, but too much filler, including a song about a member of their road

I LOVE THIS CD!



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ZEN ARCADE
SST

"I got it because all my favorite bands love it. Also, I'm a big fan of Sugar, so I already like Bob Mould."

crew, suggests an in-joke no one without a mullet will want to be a part of.
KELLY ROYCE

KENNY LOGGINS

THE ESSENTIAL KENNY LOGGINS ★★

COLUMBIA/LEGACY

Looking back at touchy-feely '70s guy-turned-soundtrack suck-up

As songwriters go, Kenny Loggins is as malleable as Play-Doh. Letting commercial winds dictate the direction of his 30-year career worked in the '70s and early '80s, when the smooth, hitmaking chameleon scored with sensitive ballads (1978's "Whenever I Call You 'Friend'"), white-boy boogie (1972's "Your Mama Don't Dance," with Jim Messina) and snappy pop (1980's impossibly catchy "I'm Alright," which pilfered the stomp of Fleetwood Mac's "Tusk"). But by the mid-'80s, Loggins's instincts failed him. Overwrought ballads juiced by synths and drum machines dominate the second disc of this 35-track retrospective, rendering it excessive rather than essential.

ERIK HIMMELSBACH

BOB MARLEY & THE WAILERS

THE COMPLETE UPSETTER COLLECTION ★★★★★

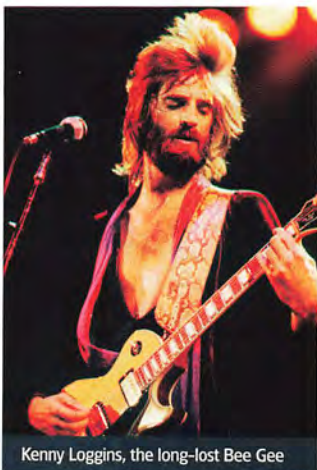
TROJAN

A six-disc compilation of sound experiments by two Jamaican giants

Each under five-foot-six and feisty, Bob Marley and Lee "Scratch" Perry were determined to shake up reggae. As a producer, Perry abrasively layered and pulled apart music to lay the foundations of dub, while the naked passion of the Wailers — Marley, Peter Tosh and Bunny Wailer — set a standard for roots harmonies. This absurdly fertile partnership produced many songs on Marley's '70s classics, but on these



Bob Marley: highly Selassie



Kenny Loggins, the long-lost Bee Gee

tracks, which start in the late '60s, the two giants come to terms with their potency. "Small Axe" delivers such a raw spirit you genuinely fear for the "big tree" about to be cut down — and Perry follows it with six takes ("More Axe," "More More Axe," etc.) of progressively inventive versions. The experiments are so daring, you can feel Marley and Perry's surprised delight.

LLOYD BRADLEY

SHUGGIE OTIS

IN SESSION: GREAT RHYTHM & BLUES ★★

GOLDENLANE

Long-lost psychedelic soul maestro helps blues greats

The belated reissue of *Inspiration Information* last year suggests that, if the stars had aligned differently, Shuggie Otis might have been hailed as a successor to Sly Stone: The original light-funk album stiffed when released in 1974, but its visionary creativity remains mind-boggling. Those hungry for more should approach *In Session* with caution — a collection of cuts overseen by Otis's R&B bandleader father, Johnny, it finds him sitting in with the revered Richard Berry, Big Joe Turner and Pee Wee Crayton, adding guitar to accomplished swing tunes. On most of the tracks, Otis sits in the background, so calling this a Shuggie record seems pretty disingenuous.

JOHN HARRIS

SCARFACE

SCARFACE'S GREATEST HITS ★★★★★

RAP-A-LOT/VIRGIN

Cash-in-quick retrospective of gangsta rap's last man standing

Houston's Scarface is a bona fide hip-hop institution, one of the first non-New York or Los Angeles badasses to gain platinum sales and ghetto respect. From the frenzied golden-era Geto Boys nihilism of →

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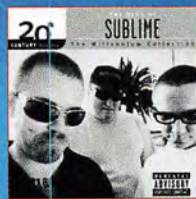
JIMI HENDRIX
Blue Wild Angel:
Live At The Isle Of Wight



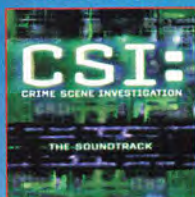
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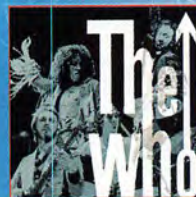
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THE WHO
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SCORPIONS
Bad For Good:
The Very Best Of



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COLLECTOR'S EDITION



ELTON JOHN
Greatest Hits
1970-2002



THE GUIDE REISSUES

"Mr. Scarface" and "Born Killer" to the compassionate "I Seen a Man Die" and "Smile," featuring Tupac, Scarface's growth mirrors rap's increased sophistication and pop sensibility during the same span. *Greatest Hits*, however, doesn't so much document this 12-year evolution as regurgitate smashes in an attempt to capitalize on the universal praise for *The Fix*, his current CD on another label. For bait, there's one new song, "Love & Friendship," a semidecent, *Fix*-esque slab of cynicism, which doesn't elevate *Hits* above a carelessly sequenced exploitation.

CHAIRMAN MAO

THE SILOS

CUBA ★★

DUALTONE

A terrific reissue of a plain-spoken, fiery rock album from '80s NYC

Back in 1987, this self-produced, self-released record was passed around like a benign social disease by rock critics and others with too much free time. A cult following grew around leader Walter Salas-Humara's plain-spoken, fertile songwriting and fiery soloing by guitarist Bob Rupe and violinist Mary Rowell. The kick of Crazy Horse and early-'70s Stones abounds, but so do the Mekons and the Meat Puppets; "Tennessee Fire" is a bohemian "Free Bird." The four bonus studio tracks here (plus two disposable live ones) rock harder than the rest, a raucous coda to a moving and profoundly American album of tales of friends and lovers, joy and sorrow, simple and true.

MICHAEL AZERRAD

SMASHING PUMPKINS

EARPHORIA ★★

VIRGIN

A frustrating document of the alt-rock pioneers: They're live, loud — and frequently lost

Smashing Pumpkins were far rowdier and smashier onstage than on record. On *Earphoria*, a mostly live collection that spans their career from 1988 inception through 1993 breakout *Siamese Dream*, the Pumpkins take their tight, powerful studio compositions and run hog-wild. Sometimes it works: The thunderous "Quiet" feels angrier and more urgent, while "Soma" benefits from frontman Billy Corgan's dramatic flair. More often, though, noise trumps craft: Wanky guitar solos don't suit "I Am One," and the usually exacting "Disarm" is a sloppy mess. And the rarities are mostly throwaways, particularly the excruciating 15-minute closer, amusing only for its hilariously apt title, "Why Am I So Tired?"

DAVID PEISNER

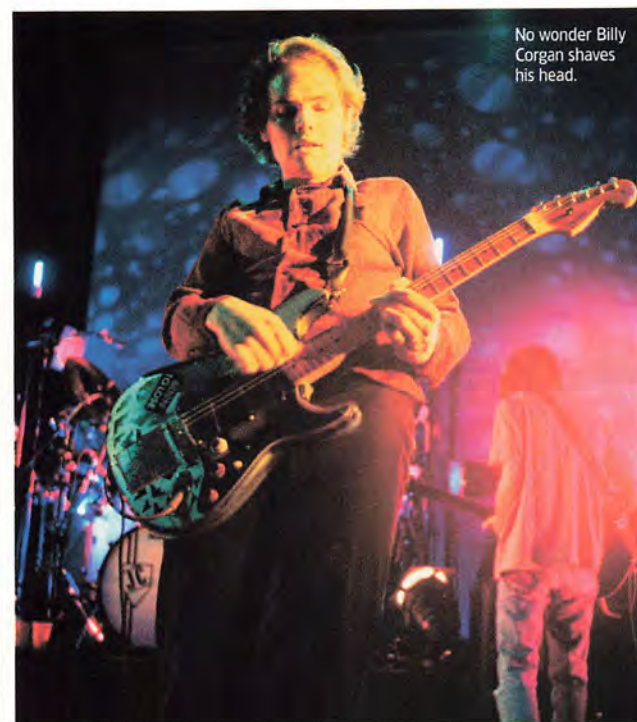
STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN

THE ESSENTIAL STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN AND DOUBLE TROUBLE ★★★

EPIC/LEGACY

Bumper cuts from the late, lightning-fingered bluesman

Following the 2000 box set *SRV*, this two-CD collection whittles Stevie →



Jay Blakesberg/Petra Ltd



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They Might Be Giants spot a mouse.

SITTIN' PRETTY?

Basement rockers recap the pre-Grammy years

THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS

DIAL-A-SONG: 20 YEARS OF THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS

★★★

RHINO

>> AFTER RAISING their profile in recent years with the theme song for *Malcolm in the Middle* (the snazzy Grammy winner "Boss of Me") and the second *Austin Powers* film ("Dr. Evil"), They Might Be Giants now conduct a catch-up session of their twitchy years.

Since 1986, the endearing Brooklyn duo of John Flansburgh (guitar, keyboards, nasal vocals) and John Linnell (accordion, sax, keyboards, additional nasal vocals) has revived the faded art of the novelty song, churning out bright, catchy ditties, including "Birdhouse in Your Soul" and "The Statue Got Me High." More than a gimmick machine, however, TMBG have prospered over the last two decades because their melodies sparkle even when their jokes inspire groans.

While silliness rules, the Giants' humor easily accommodates intelligence. The impertinent "I Should Be Allowed to Think" quotes Allen Ginsberg's Beat-poetry landmark *Howl*, and "I Can Hear You" is an ancient-sounding curio recorded without electricity on an Edison wax

cylinder, the way the inventor did it back in the 1890s. Elsewhere, Flansburgh and Linnell get carried away by the tide of their own cleverness: "Educational" tunes about painter James Ensor and President James K. Polk land with a resounding thud.

Scattered amid the joshing are less-goofy interludes. Crushing heartbreak intrudes on the breezy delivery of "They'll Need a Crane"; in a rare display of anger, "Your Racist Friend" takes a bracing stand against casual prejudice, observing, "Can't shake the devil's hand and say you're only kidding." Given that Flansburgh and Linnell (childhood friends from Lincoln, Massachusetts) seem like genuine good guys, the tender romanticism of "Another First Kiss" shouldn't be a surprise, but its sweetness is delightful in any case.

Still, these grownup tangents constitute a minor detour. Ultimately, the boundless fizz of this two-disc, 52-track retrospective sets the nerves on edge, much like a caffeine overload. The Giants are better experienced via Dial-a-Song (dialasong.com), where fans can go to hear a single tune. JON YOUNG

TMBG have revived the faded art of the novelty song.

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THE GUIDE REISSUES

I LOVE THIS CD!



SERENA WILLIAMS
TENNIS CHAMP



MARIAH CAREY
GREATEST HITS
COLUMBIA

"I don't care what people say — I support Mariah 100 percent. She's a good singer, and no matter what, you have to appreciate the quality of her voice."

Ray Vaughan's work down into a manageable package. With his heavy drug habit and premature death in a 1990 helicopter crash, the Texas guitarist never had the chance to slip into a respectable, Eric Clapton-style middle age. Despite a spell in rehab, he always sounded bad to the bone. Here, the cream of his studio tracks — "Love Struck Baby," "Mary Had a Little Lamb," "Change It" — are intercut with sizzling live renditions of, among others, "Shake for Me" and "The Sky Is Crying," on which Vaughan and his skintight backing band dirty it up like the blues masters whose music he worked hard to keep alive.

KELLY ROYCE

DWIGHT YOAKAM

REPRISE PLEASE BABY:
THE WARNER BROS. YEARS
★★★★

REPRISE/RHINO

Guitars, Cadillacs and the best hillbilly honky-tonk of the last 20 years

Dwight Yoakam is a skinny wisp who wears his jeans even tighter than your average supermodel, a barroom performer who's never had an alcoholic beverage or cigarette. Yet he's spent the last two decades cranking out some of the sharpest and meanest honky-tonk ever. *Reprise Please Baby*, a four-disc box set summing up the first 16 years of his recording career, plays like a boot to the crotch of the theory that country isn't what it used to be. Singing in a honeyed hiccup and goosed by guitarist Pete Anderson's twanging reverberation, Yoakam doesn't just evoke past masters like Buck Owens and Merle Haggard — he often outshines them. Every hit is here, from 1986's rockabilly-fied "Guitars, Cadillacs" to 1998's bittersweet kiss-off "Things Change," plus a rocking demo Yoakam cut while mixing it up on the California punkabilly scene.

RICHARD SKANSE

Blender Approved

The best reissues of the last three months



RUN-DMC GREATEST HITS

BMG HERITAGE

Arrogantly bending hip-hop to hold hard-rock weight, this Queens, New York, trio sounded like nothing before it — and still sounds raw today.



BLACK SABBATH

SYMPTOM OF THE UNIVERSE:
THE ORIGINAL BLACK SABBATH

RHINO/WARNER BROS.

Heavy metal's Old Testament spans Ozzy & Co.'s early years, from witch burning to cocaine terror.



U2

THE BEST OF 1990-2000

UNIVERSAL/ISLAND

This hits collection forsakes the earnest ballads of U2's youth for the sexy glitz of "Mysterious Ways" and "Discothèque."



PAVEMENT

SLANTED AND ENCHANTED

MATADOR

This 1992 debut from indie rock's disaffected heroes melds out-of-tune psychedelia and moments of undeniable sweetness.

REISSUES IN BRIEF >>>>>> BY ROB KEMP



Sammy Hagar (David Lee Roth in trunk)

SAMMY HAGAR

CLASSIC MASTERS
☆☆

CAPITOL

Reviled by many rock fans for replacing David Lee Roth in Van Halen, Sammy Hagar emerged with more dignity than Roth after this past summer's "Sam and Dave" tour. But his '70s recordings, pre-"I Can't Drive 55," are decidedly workmanlike — his leather-lunged vocal acrobatics are much better employed on his '80s solo material and with VH.

HARRY NILSSON

THE POINT!
☆☆☆☆

RCA/BMG HERITAGE

Cut as a soundtrack to a children's film in 1971, the sixth full album from the Beatles-endorsed popster lacks the dark undercurrent of subsequent records. *The Point!* is charming orchestral pop, highlighted by the hit "Me and My Arrow," that presages Badly Drawn Boy and the Apples in Stereo.

PAT BENATAR

CLASSIC MASTERS
☆☆

CAPITOL

Her ill-advised shag haircut and new-wave wardrobe have dated, but Pat Benatar's best tunes are slick-yet-canny hard rock. Sadly, this 12-cut quickie is poorly selected — two obscure tunes are included in lieu of classics "Hell Is for Children" and "We Live for Love."



Pat Benatar: singer, Nair spokeswoman

ROBERT CRAY

THE MILLENNIUM COLLECTION
☆☆

MERCURY

When "Smoking Gun" shot up the charts in 1986, Robert Cray was an anomaly — a 33-year-old black man singing the blues on rock stations that usually favored bleached bluesmen such as Eric Clapton. If quality occasionally fails him on this brief survey of his career through 1997, his guitar solos and supple gospel singing never do.

FRANK SINATRA

CLASSIC DUETS
☆☆☆☆

CAPITOL

While the don of *do-be-doo* may have had his faults, he was not stingy with the spotlight. These 21 duets from his late-'50s ABC variety show find Sinatra's exquisite phrasing shoring up the strengths of fellow luminaries Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong and Elvis Presley. It also reveals his 1993 *Duets* album as a phoned-in grotesquerie.

CROSBY & NASH

THE BEST OF CROSBY & NASH:
THE ABC YEARS
☆☆

MCA

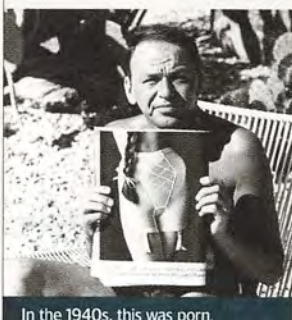
In 1975, after a mammoth stadium tour, Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young split in half. *The ABC Years* collects Crosby & Nash's second and third albums as a duo — both are flabby exercises in post-hippie indulgence and solipsism. The crisp playing of crack L.A. session players here dubbed the Mighty Jitters (a reference to their cocaine use) is a collection's saving grace.

GUY

GROOVE ME
☆☆☆☆

MCA

In the mid-'80s, producer-songwriter Teddy Riley harnessed hip-hop beats to soul for Keith Sweat and Bobby Brown, and New Jack Swing was born. Riley's hitmaking finesse persisted in his own group, which showcased the gospel-honed hollering of Aaron Hall. This 17-track compilation includes six cuts from 1988's landmark *Guy*, such as the lascivious "I Like" and the terrific party jam "Groove Me."



In the 1940s, this was porn.

GENE VINCENT AND HIS BLUE CAPS

BLUE JEAN BOP!
☆☆☆☆

GENE VINCENT AND THE BLUE CAPS
☆☆☆☆

CAPITOL

Craggy-faced, leather-clad Gene Vincent imitated Elvis Presley's Sun recordings — but what exuberant imitations they are. Aided by guitarist Cliff Gallup, Vincent blurted rockabilly of the most deranged sort. His first two albums, from 1956 and 1957, include the feral "Cat Man" and the farcical "Who Slapped John?"

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PARENTAL ADVISORY EXPLICIT CONTENT

STEVIE WONDER

➤ The former Steveland Judkins Morris, who was blinded by a botched medical procedure days after his premature birth in 1950 and raised in Detroit, is one of pop music's few indisputable geniuses.

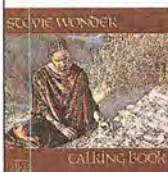
From his apprenticeship at Motown Records, where as a child prodigy he was encouraged to record "tasteful" cover songs, Wonder rebelled when he reached adulthood, threatening to abandon the label and winning full artistic control.

In the early '70s, he recorded five consecutive albums that match any winning streak in pop, that of the Beatles included. But among his majestic soul and revolutionary funk explorations are wretched novelty items and late-period stinkers galore. By Stuart Maconie

BLENDER APPROVED

TALKING BOOK MOTOWN, 1972

★★★★★



Talking Book, recorded when Wonder was 22, marks his elevation from child prodigy to mature talent. He's a one-man keyboard orchestra and studio magician: With stellar support from guitarist Jeff Beck and sax ace David Sanborn, Wonder meticulously crafts music with astonishing depth as well as a lightness of touch, from the dreamy "You Are the Sunshine of My Life" to the gutsy "Superstition," influenced by his stint opening for the Rolling Stones in 1972.

Standout tracks: "Superstition," "Maybe Your Baby," "I Believe (When I Fall in Love)"

INNERVISIONS MOTOWN, 1973

★★★★★



Wonder reportedly rates the songs on its predecessor, *Talking Book*, higher, but finds this a more cohesive whole. He brings a politicized edge to his progressive funk — as in the miniplay "Living for the City," a song about pride, injustice and hardship among urban blacks — and a new gravitas to such ballads as "Visions." Factor in the sheer exuberance of "Don't You Worry 'Bout a Thing," and *Innervisions* is another triumph.

Standout tracks: "Visions," "Higher Ground"

SONGS IN THE KEY OF LIFE MOTOWN, 1976

★★★★★



In the bicentennial year, Wonder crowns a five-year run of genius with his two-disc magnum opus of ridiculous ambition. Some purists balk at the set's hubris and popularity (it won him his third Album of the Year Grammy in four years).

But *Songs* nimbly encompasses a world of musical styles, from such imperishable anthems as the dapper Duke Ellington tribute "Sir Duke" and "Isn't She Lovely," written for his newborn daughter Aisha, to the chilling social commentary of "Village Ghetto Land."

Standout tracks: "I Wish," "Isn't She Lovely," "Pastime Paradise"

FULFILLINGNESS' FIRST FINALE

MOTOWN, 1974

★★★★★



Coming between the artistic triumph of *Innervisions* and the commercial triumph of *Songs in the Key of Life*, this comparatively muted collection confused some fans initially, but it's equally indispensable. Just before recording it, Wonder cheated death in a car crash, and that experience informs the solemnity of "They Won't Go When I Go" and "Heaven Is 10 Zillion Light Years Away." But "You Haven't Done Nothin'" is a growling rebuke of Richard Nixon, and "Boogie On Reggae Woman" nearly drips with lust.

Standout tracks: "They Won't Go When I Go," "Boogie On Reggae Woman," "You Haven't Done Nothin'"

MUSIC OF MY MIND MOTOWN, 1972

★★★★



The previous year's *Where I'm Coming From* gave notice of a mature new sound, but here's where Wonder begins to find the voice and the impeccable quality that would sustain him; defying Motown, he self-financed both *Where I'm Coming From* and *Music*

of *My Mind* to win leverage with the label after his contract expired. Here he discovers synthesizers, gets funky ("I Love Every Little Thing About You"), expands the vocabulary of soul ("Happier Than the Morning Sun") and sings like an angel.

Standout tracks: "Happier Than the Morning Sun," "Superwoman (Where Were You When I Needed You)," "I Love Every Little Thing About You"



Throwing a surprise party for Stevie Wonder really couldn't be easier

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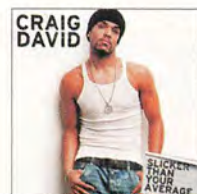
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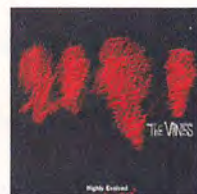
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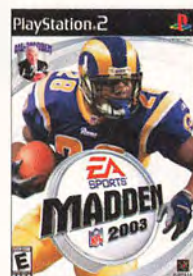
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BE CAREFUL

THE WOMAN IN RED

MOTOWN, 1984

★★



If ever a track screamed "caution!", it's the ballad "I Just Called to Say I Love You." Inane and unctuous, it's

arguably the worst single ever released by a respected musical figure — even though it won an Oscar. The rest of this soundtrack is marginally superior. **Standout track:** "It's You"

EIVETS REDNOW ...

ALFIE MOTOWN, 1968

★★



The backward title augurs a musical curio — an album of harmonica instrumentals recorded under an alias.

Wonder is a fabulous harmonica player, but this is hugely inessential. **Standout track:** "Alfie"

MY CHERIE AMOUR

MOTOWN, 1969

★★



The title track was kept in mothballs for years, reportedly due to Berry Gordy's interference, but it's the best

thing about this hodgepodge of show tunes and standards, including a rotten version of "Light My Fire."

Standout track: "My Cherie Amour"

THE JAZZ SOUL OF LITTLE STEVIE

MOTOWN, 1962

★★



Even at 12, Wonder was a skilled instrumentalist, with drums, harmonica and keyboard in his arsenal, all

showcased here. *Jazz Soul* does offer two tunes coauthored by the kid ("I'm Wondering," "Session Number 112") and some wild harmonica.

Standout track: "Some Other Time"

SOMEDAY AT CHRISTMAS

MOTOWN, 1967

★★



Unlike festive offerings from Elvis Presley and Phil Spector, which stand proudly in their respective canons,

this set has too little of Wonder's innate natural talent, too much cheap tinsel and too little genuine warmth. Goody as eggnog.

Standout track: "What Christmas Means to Me"

CHARACTERS

MOTOWN, 1987

★★



The '80s proved confusing to lots of legends; Wonder lost his bearing by tentatively trying to

modernize. Drowned in synth clatter and other trendy Prince moves, *Characters* was his worst-performing mainstream album in 15 years.

Standout track: "Skeletons"

THE 12-YEAR-OLD GENIUS

MOTOWN, 1963

★★



Taped live in order to showcase "Little Stevie's" instrumental virtuosity, this ragtag collection contains

"Fingertips Pt 2," a rousing, harmonica-driven stomper that was his first number 1 hit.

Standout track: "Fingertips Pt 2"

IN SQUARE CIRCLE

MOTOWN, 1985

★★



Pros: "Overjoyed" and "Part Time Lover" were hits. Cons: It's a dreary, menopausal collection of cabaret

schlock, showing one of the sharpest minds in pop music gone dull.

Standout track: "I Love You Too Much"

FOR FANS ONLY

TRIBUTE TO UNCLE RAY

MOTOWN, 1962

★



Wonder was weaned on Ray Charles, and Motown exploited the parallel. But no 11-year-old, even one as

gifted as Wonder, can handle this adult material convincingly.

Standout track: "Hallelujah, I Love Her So"

STEVIE AT THE BEACH

MOTOWN, 1964

★



Wonder was in two teen movies in the mid-'60s, *Muscle Beach Party* and *Bikini Beach*, which explains this

set's title. His first record without the "Little Stevie" sobriquet, its period kitsch hasn't aged well.

Standout track: "Hey Harmonica Man"

DOWN TO EARTH

MOTOWN, 1966

★



Wonder's adolescence was as confused and vexing as anyone else's: He's caught uncomfortably

between cute kiddie and gifted young man, and this has no hits or hidden gems, just a crummy version of Sonny and Cher's "Bang Bang."

Standout track: "Angel Baby (Don't You Ever Leave Me)"

WITH A SONG IN MY HEART

MOTOWN, 1963

★



Motown's strategy was to have the prodigy sing unsuitably "adult" material. This mawkish mishmash of crooner

standards and show tunes smothers his vibrancy in treacle.

Standout track: "Get Happy"

FURTHER LISTENING

STEVIE WONDER PRESENTS SYREETA

MOTOWN, 1974

★★★★

This showcase for his then-wife, Syreeta Wright, is a golden-age Wonder album in secret. All the characteristic musical magic is here — Wonder wrote it, arranged it and played most of it — but the addition of Wright's silky, feminine vocals makes it a gourmet treat for the connoisseur.

FURTHER VIEWING

CLASSIC ALBUMS: SONGS IN THE KEY OF LIFE

RHINO VIDEO AND DVD, 1998

★★★★

What makes this documentary much more essential than any performance video is seeing and hearing Wonder blithely reconstruct "Sir Duke" and "I Wish" before your widened eyes.

FURTHER READING

WHERE DID OUR LOVE GO?: THE RISE AND FALL OF THE MOTOWN SOUND

By Nelson George
ST. MARTIN'S PRESS, 1986

★★★★

In the absence of a proper Wonder biography, Nelson George's tough-minded history of Motown is the only proper analysis of the man and his peers.

GREAT

HOTTER THAN JULY

MOTOWN, 1980

★★★★



An earthbound follow-up to 1979's oblique *Journey Through the Secret Life of Plants*, this comeback

lacks the depth of his masterpieces, but swings expertly. "I Ain't Gonna Stand for It" (which starts with a country twang) and the reggae-dipped "Master Blaster" are punchy and slick, and "Happy Birthday," a tribute to Martin Luther King Jr., is so irrepressible, it helped speed the campaign to make King's birthday a national holiday.

Standout tracks: "I Ain't Gonna Stand for It," "Master Blaster"

SIGNED SEALED & DELIVERED

MOTOWN, 1970

★★★★



The wincingly cheesy cover masks what is, ironically, his first vaguely radical collection. On the gently political

"Heaven Help Us All" and his funky reading of the Beatles' "We Can Work It Out" (which reflects a growing sense of ambition), Wonder begins shucking off Motown conventions — but, young pro that he is, still provides the label with three monster hits, including the ecstatic title track.

Standout tracks: "Signed, Sealed, Delivered I'm Yours"

I WAS MADE TO LOVE HER

MOTOWN, 1967

★★★★



If nothing else competes with the dizzying brilliance of its title track, this is still the 17-year-old Wonder in an

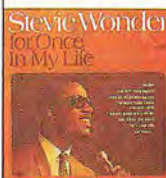
ebullient mood, deftly emulating his heroes on such covers as "Respect" and "My Girl," and stretching out on a clutch of neat originals. The backing of the smoking Motown house band makes this his first properly assured and complete album.

Standout tracks: "I Was Made to Love Her"

FOR ONCE IN MY LIFE

MOTOWN, 1968

★★★★



Here's where Motown's politburo belatedly acknowledge that maybe they don't know best.

Not only does Wonder write the bulk of the material, he also takes his first turn in the producer's seat and experiments instrumentally, playing the clavinet, which was soon to become a funky trademark. The result is another significant milestone and some first-rate music. Just skip the cover of Bobby Hebb's "Sunny."

Standout tracks: "Shoo-Be-Doo-Be-Doo-Da-Day," "You Met Your Match"

WHERE I'M COMING FROM

MOTOWN, 1971

★★★★



After nearly a decade of huge hits and false moves, Wonder — soon to turn 21 and inspired by Marvin Gaye's

What's Going On — moved to New York City with his new wife, Syreeta Wright, a former Motown secretary. Wonder's first entirely self-produced record lacks the focus of his next few releases, and is dogged by gauche-ness. But the signs are there:

Psychedelia jostles with R&B, funk with pop. For all its patchiness, *Where I'm Coming From* is alive with promise and had one major hit in the winding "If You Really Love Me."

Standout track: "Look Around"



Stevie loved to pretend that his harmonica was a *Star Trek* communicator.

CHECK IT OUT

JOURNEY THROUGH THE SECRET LIFE OF PLANTS

MOTOWN, 1979

★★★



THE WEIRDEST ALBUM!

Greeted with bafflement on its release (Rolling Stone's verdict of "perplexing" was among the kinder reviews),

Plants has become, like the Clash's *Sandinista!* or Lou Reed's *Metal Machine Music*, a cult classic for contrarians. A largely instrumental suite for a film that disappeared without a trace, it's easily the strangest thing he's ever done. It also holds stirrings of the New Age consciousness that quickly spread throughout the culture.

Standout track: "Send One Your Love"

UP-TIGHT

MOTOWN, 1966

★★★★



When his career was slow to start, some skeptics at Motown suggested the red-hot label drop him. But

at 15, he broke through with "Up-tight," his first self-written song, inspired by the Stones' "Satisfaction." Motown dashed out *Up-tight*, a set that lacks stylistic unity but has its moments. His cover of Bob Dylan's antiwar anthem "Blowin' in the Wind" is striking (and was a number 1 R&B hit), and "Nothing's Too Good for My Baby," though an "Up-tight" retread, was another smash.

Standout track: "Up-tight"

JUNGLE FEVER

MOTOWN, 1991

★★★



As patchy as the Spike Lee movie it soundtracks: the nods to contemporary techno-soul are perfunctory; a good friend should have

stopped Wonder from rapping; and the title track is horrible — but compared to his late-'80s output, *Jungle Fever* is a minor renaissance, offering a dash of edge.

Standout tracks: "Queen in the Black," "These Three Words"

CONVERSATION PEACE

MOTOWN, 1995

★★★★



Few would dispute that Wonder's best work was far behind him. Still, his most impressive record in 15

years demonstrates why he's a legend. If the subject matter is often little more than romantic cliché or vague, platitudinous blather, the music is adroit and shows an awareness of new trends in R&B — computerized production, club grooves, hip-hop's sonic palette — on "My Love Is With You" and "Sensuous Whisper."

Standout tracks: "Rain Your Love Down," "Cold Chill"

NATURAL WONDER

MOTOWN, 1995

★★★★



In a career dotted with live albums of varying quality, *Natural Wonder* earns supremacy by virtue of its

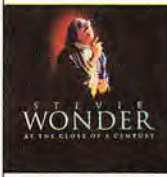
encompassing scope. Cherry-picked from a 1995 world tour on which he was backed by several orchestras, this consummately performed collection covers his output from his teen hits through mid-'70s gems to the later, problematic material. A little too slick for some, though.

Standout tracks: "Higher Ground," "I Wish"

AT THE CLOSE OF A CENTURY

MOTOWN, 1999

★★★★



Record-store racks groan with Wonder compilations. But a giant like Wonder deserves a properly

compendious box, and this four-CD set is it. Skillfully compiled and intelligently remastered, and sensibly highlighting his mid-'70s heyday (*Songs in the Key of Life* gets nine tracks), this collection corrals all the hits and more.

Standout track: "Living for the City"



"On the count of three, you'll awake, and not mind the ticket prices."

Size Does Matter

Can rock's top codgers still cut it in a small venue? Yes, they can! But in a big arena? Not so much . . .

THE ROLLING STONES

FIRST UNION CENTER, PHILADELPHIA

SEPTEMBER 20, 2002 ★★

TOWER THEATER, PHILADELPHIA

SEPTEMBER 22, 2002 ★★★★★

➤ A FEW MONTHS AGO, Keith Richards told *Blender* that he still gets a "chubby" in concert when he sees "Tumbling Dice" coming up next on the set list. His comment is testimony both to the fantastically resilient cardiovascular system of the Stones' chemical trash can, and his enduring enthusiasm for this whole rock & roll business. After all, 30 years have passed since Richards and Mick Jagger penned the song, and 40 since the Stones began — an anniversary they're marking with a world tour in which they play three different-sized venues in the same city: a stadium, an arena and an intimate theater show, like this evening's concert at Philadelphia's Tower Theater.

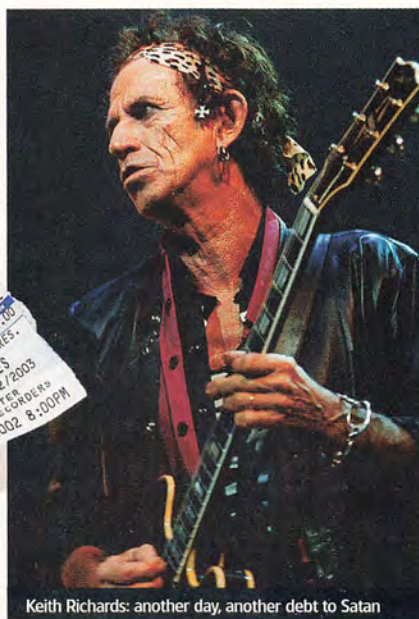
Sadly, due to the groin-obscuring presence of Keef's guitar, it's impossible for a reporter to

confirm whether the Richards family jewels are standing at attention as he returns to the comparatively small stage for tonight's encore, and grinds out "Tumbling's" opening chords. But it's easy to believe they are. Richards's perfor-

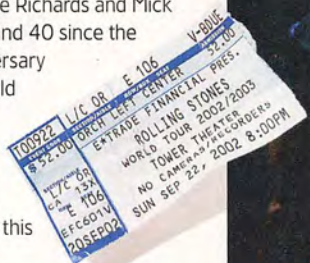
mance is more young punk than aging icon as he swaggers, swoops and, on one occasion, duck-walks backward through a set that eschews greatest hits in favor of covers (Smokey Robinson's "Going to a Go-Go," the O'Jays' "Love Train") and rarely played originals (the funky "Hot Stuff" and "Hand of Fate," both from 1976's *Black and Blue*). Most miraculously, Richards's lead vocal on "Before They Make Me Run" finds him sounding stronger and clearer than ever — ironic, given the incomprehensible mumbling that passes for his onstage banter.

What a far cry from the show two nights earlier at the cavernous First Union Center. At the start there, the Stones lurch into a muddy, dissonant free-for-all that *Blender* assumes is some avant-garde "new direction." Only when Jagger yelps "Everywhere I hear the sound of marching, charging feet, boy!" does the realization dawn that this mess might be "Street Fighting Man."

Things get worse — much worse — before they get better, as in quick succession the band butchers another goldie ("It's Only Rock 'N' Roll"), disinters a less-than-goodie ("If You Can't Rock Me") and demonstrates that "Don't Stop," the best of the four new cuts on their current *Forty Licks* compilation, is still absolutely godawful.



Keith Richards: another day, another debt to Satan





At the start of the evening, Chrissie Hynde of the Pretenders interrupts her band's supporting slot to declare, "We owe the Stones so much — I'd be waiting tables without them." But with a quarter of the Stones' set over, the question no longer seems to be how much we owe them, but how much they're ripping us off: *Blender's* \$150 ticket is still a football field's length from the stage, while *Fortune* magazine recently estimated that since 1989, the band has grossed more than \$1 billion in tour revenue.

But in the ensuing hour and a half, the Stones make up a good deal of ground, delivering fair renditions of the hits ("Gimme Shelter," "Start Me Up," an anime video-accompanied "Honky Tonk Woman") and relocating to a small stage in the middle of the hall for their disco triumph "Miss You," "Beast of Burden" and an agreeably endless "Brown Sugar." The show also features showcases, including Charlie Watts meshing immaculately with the four-piece horn section during the climax of "All Down the Line," Jagger howling a harmonica solo in the middle of "Can't You Hear Me Knocking" and the newly sober Ron Wood proving that his days of stumbling around in Keef's shadow, both metaphorically and literally, are now over.

Though the arena concert proves satisfying, a pair of tickets to see the show at the smaller theater sold on eBay for close to \$1,000, a measure of its desirability. Those lucky enough to see the Tower show will tell their grandchildren about it — even if, considering the graying crowd, that could occur as early as the next morning. In part, of course, there is the sheer thrill of seeing the Rolling Stones in such intimate surroundings (the venue holds 3,000, instead of the arena's 17,000). But as the band opens with a swaggering "Jumping Jack Flash," it's obvious that this is going to be a very different show.

Despite the unfamiliar set list, the band could not appear more relaxed. Watts even cracks a few smiles, while Jagger discards his frenetic limb-and-ass-shaking to glad-hand the audience. Never one for an apology, he's almost sheepish when he cautions against the possibility of miscues at the start of "Hot Stuff." "We haven't done this one for a bit," he warns. True, he may be on tour only because his restless forays into acting, movie producing and solo records have been (to be gentle) failures. But when Jagger's on this kind of form, he demonstrates that the title of World's Greatest Rock & Roll Band is not one you win in a raffle.

Audience reaction to this performance is, unsurprisingly, ecstatic. In turn, the band seems genuinely touched: Even though it's still an hour until "Tumbling Dice" alters his blood flow, Richards concludes his solo spot with a heartfelt "Bless you all!"

At least that's what we *think* he said. . . .

CLARK COLLIS

It may be only rock & roll — but apparently, they like it.



The title of World's Greatest Rock & Roll Band is not one you win in a raffle.



"Did you hear the one about Bill Wyman and the underage girl?"

This is what Mick looks like to Keith — all the time!



HOW'D YOU LIKE THE SHOW? FIRST UNION CENTER, SEPTEMBER 20, 2002



JOHN LANG

28, UNEMPLOYED

"It was unbelievable. I'm exhausted. I've seen them many times, and they just get better and better. I hope they're doing this 20 years from now — I want to see these guys well into their eighties."



ERIKA SILVERIO AND BRIAN TETREAULT

24, BIOTECH WORKER;
21, STUDENT

ERIKA: "I saw them in Massachusetts, which was bigger, with fireworks."
BRIAN: "I liked it, but when they came into the middle, it didn't sound good."



LINDA SWAIN AND JOE NASSIB

43, TV PRESENTER;
41, CONSTRUCTION COMPANY OWNER

LINDA: "I thought it was amazing that Mick's butt was smaller than mine. And I've got a small butt!"
JOE: "Even Keith's singing sounded really good!"



TIM CALLAGHAN

47, IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT SUPERVISOR

"I've seen them about 12 or 13 times, but this was a rare treat. They covered a lot of old stuff: 'Monkey Man,' 'Love in Vain' — they haven't done that since Altamont, I think."

CLARK COLLIS

Chris Martin sports a strange faux bandage. The reason? Who knows!

Leading Lights

Coldplay prove they're the best new band of the last five years

COLDPLAY

FLEETBOSTON PAVILION, BOSTON

SEPTEMBER 17, 2002 ★★★★★

➤ IN ONE OF the supersize backstage dressing rooms under the tent of the FleetBoston Pavilion, Chris Martin buries his head in a steaming vaporizer. Just minutes after the show, the Coldplay singer is thinking about his band's influences. "Are we more Radiohead or U2?" he muses. "I think we're Radio 2."

Coldplay owe both bands a considerable debt. After Radiohead decided not to record another audience-pleasing album like 1995's *The Bends*, Coldplay filled the void. Their 1.3 million-selling debut, 2000's *Parachutes*, delivered a similar aching, melancholic modern rock. Soon after, Martin got involved in Oxfam's campaign for fairer world trade — the organization has stands at tonight's performance — because "we learned from U2 to show what causes we're into."

But can Coldplay match the live power and charisma of their favorite bands? A series of annoyingly apologetic performances last year — during which a bumbling Martin resembled Hugh Grant with a guitar — suggested the response was, no way. Tonight, halfway through a three-week tour, Coldplay's performance gives a markedly different answer.

The four-piece may still look like a group of scruffy college students, but from the thumping opening chords of "Politik," it's clear that they have advanced since the August release of their exquisite second album, *A Rush of Blood to the*

Head, which peaked at number 5 on the charts.

Coldplay exhibit Radioheadlike strengths: a firm grasp of arena-size dynamics, delicate playing and a knack for emotive chord changes. Indeed, during the fourth song comes the biggest outbreak of audience air piano this side of the Billy Joel–Elton John tour.

With the other three members of Coldplay frozen on the spot, the most striking change is the performance and bearing of Martin.

His voice, the band's trump card, has benefited from singing lessons. ("When you've got some money, you might as well spend it," he

explains. "It was either lessons or a crack habit.") He swoops effortlessly into the highest register during *Parachutes*' "Everything's Not Lost," inspiring an epidemic of making out among some of the deliriously happy (and surprisingly female-heavy) 5,000-strong Boston crowd.

The old equivocation is gone — the 25-year-old's newfound confidence seems to drip off him. In the manner of Bono, he slips "tributes" to Nelly, Aerosmith and Britney Spears into his songs, and during a triumphant rendering of the breakthrough ballad "Yellow," he turns the microphone to the audience and has it sing the verses for him.

Martin displays no Thom Yorke-style moodiness or Bono-esque delusions of grandeur. Instead, he cracks jokes and thanks the fans more than 15 times, while a certain gaucheness leads him to sport a silly pretend arm bandage (just like the one worn by Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood) and to salute the gutsy opening act like this: "Ash are a band we watched as toddlers, and now they have the humiliation of supporting us."

Yet by the time a heartbreaking "The Scientist" and "In My Place" close the set, the band's melancholic but uplifting spirit — what Martin has called the feeling of "leaving the party early" — wafts gently across the auditorium, enrapturing the audience.

Moments later, a teetotaling Martin slumps into a chair backstage. Judging by tonight's performance, Coldplay rate as the best new rock act of the last five years.

Martin looks up from his vaporizer. "We've gotten a lot better," he grins. *ANDY PEMBERTON*

Coldplay inspire the biggest outbreak of air piano since the Billy Joel–Elton John tour.



Chris Martin: "And this next one's called 'Chopsticks.'"

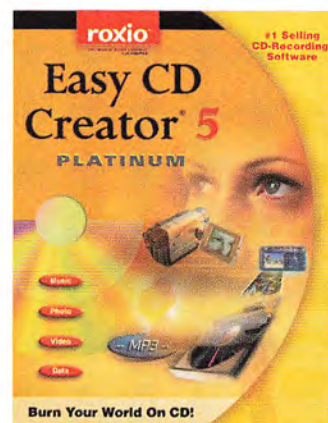
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“I Body-Slammed Ozzy Osbourne!

In his final days as Minnesota's rebellious governor, **Jesse Ventura** is still wrestling with the issues and cranking classic rock. And even the music gods of Minneapolis can't escape his official judgment: "Prince is a strange dude!"

BY TODD PRUZAN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY C. TAYLOR CROTHERS



Governor Ventura, a mere 15 years before inauguration

➤ THE PORSCHE BOXSTER S purrs before the Minnesota state capitol building, its stereo pumping Counting Crows' "Mr. Jones" into the cloudless St. Paul afternoon. Its driver, Governor Jesse Ventura, is out enjoying one of his last days as America's most notorious public servant, before he passes the torch in January.

Ventura, 51, chews an unlit cigar and flashes the devil horns before gawking tourists. "You can tell I'm looking forward to being a civilian," Ventura booms, "so I can kick ass again!"

Of course, he's never really stopped kicking ass. In the 1980s, he was Jesse "The Body" Ventura, the six-foot-four, 250-pound thug who donned feather boas to clobber his opponents in the wrestling ring. But on election day 1998, as a third-party maverick, he amazed the nation by winning Minnesota's highest public office.

The former Navy SEAL quickly made waves as an outspoken social critic — "Organized religion is a crutch for the weak-minded," he said in 1999 — and he's never looked back. "The press," Ventura muses, "is gonna miss me immensely."

Between 1978 and 1981, Ventura made his rock & roll reputation as a tour bodyguard: "I did Seger, I did the Stones twice, I did Springsteen, Rush, the Grateful Dead." And like any public official worth his salt, he knows his local rock heroes, like Bob Mould, a fellow wrestling fanatic.

"I do know Bob," Ventura says, "but I never really got into — what's the term for it? — 'alternative rock.' How about Prince? 'I've met him, but he never talks. He's a strange dude.' Bob Dylan? 'I'd love to meet him,'" Ventura nods. "Although my wife says that with that new mustache, he looks just like Vincent Price. . . ."



THE JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE

ARE YOU EXPERIENCED
MCA, 1967

"That was my first taste of Hendrix. Gosh, I shouldn't tell you this story. I was 16, and my best friend's brother was in college. We made a deal that we'd clean up after their parties if they'd let us come. So it was all college kids and girls, and we were lyin' our asses off, sayin' 'we were in college! That's when I first heard this album!'"



WARREN ZEVON

A QUIET NORMAL LIFE: THE BEST OF WARREN ZEVON
ASYLUM, 1986

"My buddies were into Warren — I think the inauguration was when I first met him. He mailed me his last album, plus he brought me a tape from Hunter Thompson. Hunter put together a compilation of great music, stuff that he likes and that I like. It's kind of dangerous to say, but my musical tastes are probably pretty close to Hunter's."



BLACK SABBATH

PARANOID
WARNER BROS., 1971

"I really like this one, with 'War Pigs.' In the early days of wrestling, we drove everywhere, so I'd listen to Black Sabbath. I used to listen to Ozzy a lot. I did a photo shoot with him once, where I got Ozzy picked up in a body slam. I'll always remember he had all of his toenails painted black."



LED ZEPPELIN

LED ZEPPELIN
ATLANTIC, 1969

"I think this is the best album they ever did, 'cause it's the one where they really created what heavy metal is today — they took the blues and added metal to it. We started listening to Zeppelin in my senior year in high school. We were into FM — FM was kind of underground then. That stuff Davy Jones of the Monkees advertises on late-night TV? That's classic AM. Well, we weren't listening to that."



THE EAGLES

THEIR GREATEST HITS (1971-1975)
ASYLUM, 1976

"I'd have to get the Eagles in there. I'm big into the best-ofs — after moving around a while, you get the best bang for your buck by buyin' the best-of. And the Eagles are so great, you gotta buy a pair of 'em. I like both ends of the Eagles, too: pre-Joe Walsh and after Joe Walsh joined, when they turned much more electric."



THE ROLLING STONES

HOT ROCKS 1964-1971
ABKCO, 1972

"I'm the only governor who's ever declared Rolling Stones Day, in '99. Mick Jagger said to me, 'No one's ever done that for us.' And Keith Richards walks up to me and he says, 'So you bodyguarded us from '78 to '81. And now you're the governor?' I said, 'Yup.' He looks at me and he goes, 'Fucking great! Then he gave me his guitar pick.'"



"My CDs kick your governor's CDs' ass."



JONNY LANG
WANDER THIS WORLD
A&M, 1998

"He was playin' the bars at 13, and his folks had to sit in the bar, because they wouldn't let him in. I went to his bachelor party — he's 20 or 21 now. This kid's a genius. You think you're hearing a 45-year-old black blues singer. When I introduce him at shows, I say, 'God took Stevie Ray Vaughan away from us, but He replaced him with Jonny Lang.'"



THE BEATLES
THE BEATLES
CAPITOL, 1968

"When the Beatles were on *Ed Sullivan*, the next day in junior high school, every kid came to school with his hair combed straight down in front like the Beatles. My friends were all getting expelled. But this is my favorite Beatles album. Who back then would ever do an album with nothing on it — no photos, no nothing?"



CROSBY, STILLS, NASH & YOUNG
4 WAY STREET
ATLANTIC, 1971

"This, to me, is one of the greatest live albums ever made. The singing is so phenomenal. Maybe it's only because it's my generation, but I think the artists back then seemed to have more to say. The thing that troubles me today is that the artists are all created in studios. Half of 'em aren't even musicians."



BOB SEGER & THE SILVER BULLET BAND
AGAINST THE WIND
CAPITOL, 1980

"I don't want religious songs at my funeral, because I don't identify with them. When I die, I want songs that meant something to me — my wife knows: 'Stairway to Heaven' and 'Against the Wind.' That reminds me of me: I'm older now, and still running against the wind."

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> **Nemesis** strikes back with juicy special effects and battle sequences.

THE GOOD!

THE LAST GENERATION?

The tenth *Star Trek* movie might be the final frontier for science fiction's greatest gang. By Ted Lambert

STAR TREK: NEMESIS

DIRECTED BY Stuart Baird

STARRING Patrick Stewart, Brent Spiner, Tom Hardy, LeVar Burton, Michael Dorn, Jonathan Frakes, Whoopi Goldberg, Gates McFadden, Kate Mulgrew, Marina Sirtis



From Versace's Spring 2369 line

>> DOES *STAR TREK* even matter these days? There's no shortage of movies that boldly go where the *Starship Enterprise* has gone before in its 36 years on TV and the big screen, but the franchise has nearly been overtaken by *Star Wars*, *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Matrix* — not to mention Metal Gear Solid, or anything else your Xbox can handle.

But don't count *Star Trek* out yet. *Star Trek: Nemesis*, the tenth in the big-screen series, strikes back with juicy special effects and large-scale battle sequences that have been sorely missing from recent *Star Trek* movies.

The Hollywood rumor mill suggests that *Nemesis* may be the final chance to see the cast of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* on the big screen. If it is, it's a fitting farewell. Most of the *TNG* cast have played their roles since 1987, giving their universe a rare cohesion. Compare that with the recent *Star Wars* movies: a chaotic clash of strange monsters, English and American accents and a wild range of acting abilities (or inabilities). At least *Star Trek* knows its own identity.

The *Nemesis* story opens with the wedding of long-betrothed *Enterprise* officers Riker (Jonathan Frakes) and Troi (Marina Sirtis), but soon escalates into war against a strangely familiar foe. Captain Jean-Luc Picard (Patrick Stewart), secretly cloned years ago, now must fight Shinzon (Tom Hardy), a half-alien Picard clone raised to destroy the Federation. Also working a double shift is B-9, a copy of

Picard's robot crew member Data (Brent Spiner), who lacks any of Data's knowledge.

One of the movie's pleasures is the return of the Romulans, the quasi-ancient Roman villains, from the original series — but its greatest asset, as always, is Stewart, playing Picard as an officer and a gentleman. And if Paramount Pictures is looking to recruit a new crew, they'll have a tough gang to follow.

THAT'S ILLOGICAL, CAPTAIN!

Five reasons why *Star Trek* makes absolutely no sense

ASTRONOMY

How come every planet has a breathable atmosphere and humanoid (if occasionally blue) aliens?

VULCAN PSYCHOLOGY

If you couldn't feel any emotion, would you even get up in the morning?

PROTECTIVE GEAR

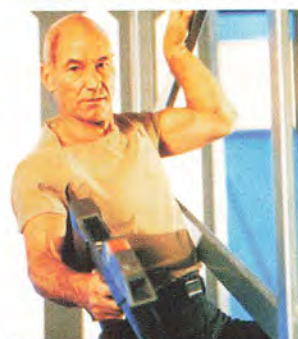
High-heeled boots and miniskirts aren't too practical for space exploration.

MILITARY STRATEGY

Why do the top brass risk their lives in every combat scene?

KIRK'S WIG AND PICARD'S BALD PATE

Won't hair loss have been stamped out by the 2200s?



"'Mr. Clean'? I'll show you Mr. Clean."



THE BAD!

EXTREME OPS

DIRECTED BY Christian Duguay

STARRING Devon Sawa, Rufus Sewell, Rupert Graves, Bridgette Wilson-Sampras, Klaus Maria Brandauer, Klaus Lowitsch

AFTER BRUISER Vin Diesel's smash hit XXX last summer, an onslaught of "extreme sports adventure" movies are on the way — each with *X* or *Extreme* in the title. This time around, filmmakers shooting a commercial in the Austrian Alps accidentally notice a nasty Serbian war criminal outside his secret mountain hideout. Soon they're on the run, but the plot goes nowhere fast. All the promise of a 007 movie with none of the wattage, but plenty of formulaic snowboarding, motorcycles, skydiving and every other sort of propulsion. Which can't quite make up for a lack of Diesel fuel.



& THE INDIE!

STANDING IN THE SHADOWS OF MOTOWN

DIRECTED BY Paul Justman

STARRING The Funk Brothers

FEW FANS OUTSIDE Detroit have heard of the Funk Brothers, Motown's brilliant, all-but-anonymous house band. But everyone's heard the hits they played: "I Heard It Through the Grapevine," "Ain't No Mountain High Enough" and dozens of other eternal smashes. *Shadows*, an uplifting yet poignant documentary, finally celebrates the Brothers 30 years after their last hit, with interviews and 2000 reunion-gig footage featuring Chaka Khan, Bootsy Collins and Ben Harper. *Shadows*'s crowning feat: breathing new life into these overfamiliar oldies.

Blender Approved

The best movies of the last three months



8 MILE

Bring the pain. Eminem's first starring role, depicting his rise to stardom from grimmest Detroit.



PUNCH-DRUNK LOVE

A loopy Adam Sandler plays a love-struck loser who's pestered by the porn industry. Weird fun.

LAST GOOD MOVIE YOU SAW?



LIONEL RICHIE

Eighties hit machine and ex-Commodore

"I TOOK MY son to see XXX. His mother wanted to kill me for taking him, but it was a perfect film for us boys — so action-packed!"

AND THE REST ...



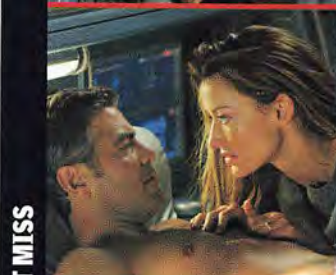
THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS

DIRECTED BY Peter Jackson

STARRING Elijah Wood, Sean Astin, Sir Ian McKellen, Viggo Mortensen, Cate Blanchett, Brad Dourif

THE PITCH The second in Tolkien's trilogy sees the conflict heating up, as the dueling warlords organize their evil armies.

THE VERDICT More rock, less talk than *The Fellowship of the Ring*. Introduces Gollum — and the Ents, those free-thinking trees.



SOLARIS

DIRECTED BY Steven Soderbergh

STARRING George Clooney, Natascha McElhone, Jeremy Davies, Viola Davis

THE PITCH Clooney investigates a death on a space station — and the place seems haunted by alien ghosts. Based on a 1970s Russian sci-fi flick.

THE VERDICT It's no *Ocean's Eleven*, but Clooney and Soderbergh score again with a spooky, sexy, psychological space thriller — and another hip remake.



ADAPTATION

DIRECTED BY Spike Jonze

STARRING Nicolas Cage, Meryl Streep, Chris Cooper

THE PITCH Cage plays screenwriter Charlie Kaufman, struggling to adapt a book by a *New Yorker* writer (Streep), and Kaufman's fictional goofy twin brother.

THE VERDICT This film-within-a-film swerves abruptly from silly to scary. Far darker than Kaufman and Jonze's *Being John Malkovich*. The feel-weird movie of the year!



ABOUT SCHMIDT

DIRECTED BY Alexander Payne

STARRING Jack Nicholson, Hope Davis, Kathy Bates, Dermot Mulroney

THE PITCH Nicholson's a forcibly retired, recently widowed insurance man who crosses Nebraska in a motorhome to watch his daughter marry a guy he doesn't actually like.

THE VERDICT Deadpan Jack gets laughs as his life falls apart — and gets seduced by Kathy Bates in a hot tub. Mrrrrrow!



ANALYZE THAT

DIRECTED BY Harold Ramis

STARRING Robert De Niro, Billy Crystal, Lisa Kudrow

THE PITCH The sequel to *Analyze This* sees De Niro back as an ex-mob boss trying to rejoin society, with Crystal returning as his nebbishy, nerve-jangled shrink.

THE VERDICT It's familiar terrain by now. Still, if you've been waiting for years to see De Niro belting out Broadway show tunes — run, don't walk!



THE HOT CHICK

DIRECTED BY Tom Brady

STARRING Rob Schneider, Rachel McAdams, Anna Faris, Andrew Keegan, Matthew Lawrence

THE PITCH A beautiful, cruel teenager (Faris) awakens one morning to discover she's turned into Rob Schneider. (Wasn't Mom always warning about that?)

THE VERDICT A predictable morality comedy. And like the girl, things get uglier as the story goes on.



Damian Lewis (foreground) and *Brothers*, not at ease

VICTORY!

But the cost is high in Steven Spielberg's heroic, brutal 10-hour World War II epic. By Clark Collis

BAND OF BROTHERS

DIRECTED BY

Tom Hanks, David Frankel, David Leland, Richard Loncraine, David Nutter, Phil Alden Robinson, Mikael Salomon, Tony To

STARRING

Damian Lewis, Donnie Wahlberg, Ron Livingston, David Schwimmer, Frank John Hughes

HBO VIDEO

★★★★

➤➤ ONE OF THE great feats of HBO's *The Sopranos* is convincing viewers that any character, no matter how beloved or vital to the plot, might wind up selling hot VCRs outside the Pearly Gates at any moment. The same achievement applies to the network's 2001 miniseries *Band of Brothers* — with one crucial difference. While *The Sopranos* makes us wonder who's going to make it to the end of the season, *Brothers* actually makes us relieved for each character who lives through another scene.

In a moment midway through this 10-hour World War II miniseries, executive-produced by Steven Spielberg, American

officer Richard Winters (Damian Lewis) advises an underling on how to command Easy Company, the paratrooping "brothers" progressing from training through D-Day to their capture of Hitler's bunker. Ordinarily, this chat would have serious plot ramifications, but Winters's speech is suddenly destroyed by a hail of bullets that turn his colleague from commander into colander. Even more shocking: It's friendly fire, from a frightened American soldier.

Spielberg's insistence on realistic depictions of his subjects' behavior, both good and bad, and epic direction by such big-screen veterans as Phil Alden Robinson (*Field of Dreams*) and Mikael Salomon (*Hard Rain*), sets *Band of Brothers* on the road to greatness. What gets it there is the excellent (if bewilderingly vast) cast, headed up by Lewis, Donnie Wahlberg and the always watchable Ron Livingston, portraying an intelligence officer who's as concerned with defeating the Nazis as he is with securing his next bottle of Vat 69.

Band of Brothers, bundled here with a documentary featuring extensive reminiscing by the real members of Easy Company, is a timely reminder of what may stand for eternity as humanity's greatest moment of madness.

We're relieved when a character makes it to the next scene.

EIGHT LEGGED FREAKS

WARNER BROS. HOME VIDEO

★★★

Not for anyone with a terrible fear of either spiders or movies starring David Arquette. This giant arachnid horror-comedy desperately wants to be a next-gen *Tremors*. But that film was both funny and terrifying — unlike *Freaks*, which, frankly, is neither. (*Tremors* also starred Kevin Bacon, a leading man you didn't want to see eaten at the first opportunity.) Includes commentary, an alternate ending and spider trivia.

GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS

ARTISAN

★★★★

"What's your name?" "Fuck You. That's my name." With a cast featuring Al Pacino, Ed Harris and Kevin Spacey, who woulda thunk the most memorable performance in David Mamet's high-testosterone tale of real-estate salesmen would come from Alec Baldwin as a bullying executive? Baldwin exits too early, but Mamet draws enough plot jackknives to make the story a gripping one. Also includes a tribute to the late Jack Lemmon (as sad-sack Shelly "The Machine" Levene).

INSOMNIA

WARNER HOME VIDEO

★★★

Given the awesome originality of director Christopher Nolan's previous film, *Memento*, this leaden Alaskan-wilderness thriller is a decided disappointment. Al Pacino plays a beleaguered LAPD cop who (acciden-

tally?) shoots his partner while investigating a murder and then has trouble sleeping. Despite a cracking central performance from Pacino, many viewers may have the opposite problem.

THE ITALIAN JOB

PARAMOUNT HOME ENTERTAINMENT

★★★★★

Before there was Austin Powers, there was *The Italian Job* — and even Mike Myers would surely admit to Michael Caine's considerable superiority. *The Italian Job* finds Caine trying to rob \$4 million in gold with help from a band of oddball crooks (including Benny Hill!) and a fleet of Minis. But the plot is really an excuse to preserve the sexy, funny, poorly orthodontured spirit of Swinging London in 1969. Enjoy this rerelease now, before — holy Lord, not — next year's remake with Mark Wahlberg.

MR. DEEDS

COLUMBIA TRISTAR

★★★

After the mirth vacuum that was *Little Nicky*, this

remake of Gary Cooper's *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* has Adam Sandler back on familiar

ground as a naive but hilariously violent small-town pizza guy on the loose in Manhattan after inheriting a fortune. Sandler, as usual, gives the biggest laughs to supporting characters, like John Turturro's butler/foot fetishist. But Winona Ryder, as Deeds's love interest, proves she's as hopeless at gross-out comedy as she is at everything else.

Blender Approved

The best DVDs of the last three months



THE LONG GOODBYE

MGM/UA HOME VIDEO

Robert Altman's hilariously deadpan 1973 update of Raymond Chandler's detective hero, Philip Marlowe, starring the sardonic Elliott Gould.



STEPPING RAZOR: RED X

MUSIC VIDEO DISTRIBUTORS

A terrific 1992 doc of militant reggae artist Peter Tosh, the Wailers' Malcolm X to Bob Marley's Martin Luther King Jr. Features vintage interview footage.

PAVEMENT: SLOW CENTURY

MATADOR

★★★★

The final word on Pavement. The California slackers set the agenda for '90s indie rock, but agenda-setting was anathema to them, as were all things professional. (*Slow Century's* interviews are contests for band members to out-shrug one another.) This DVD's 10 years of archival footage and videos include shambolic gigs, typified by the drummer's handstands, and the Great Lollapalooza Disaster of '95, when leader Stephen Malkmus, assaulted by mud (and one chucklehead's well-aimed rock), tosses his guitar and stomps offstage.

ROB KEMP

REIGN OF FIRE

BUENA VISTA HOME VIDEO

★★

Reign of Fire is a movie in which we see London being destroyed spectacularly, at vast expense, by the scariest dragons imaginable. At least that's what was on the movie poster. Sadly, though, the movie itself turns out to be one in which Christian Bale and an absurdly buff Matthew McConaughey run around some deserted English countryside, at very little expense, pursued by what appear to be some large, scaly geese. Extras include a "Breathing Life Into the Terror" (ha!) featurette.

SMASHING PUMPKINS: VIEUPHORIA

VIRGIN

★★★★

In their prime, the Smashing Pumpkins were nothing less than a fearsome live act (with their secret weapon, drummer Jimmy Chamberlain, who was exiled in 1996 after the fatal heroin overdose of the touring keyboardist). This DVD



Attack of the Clones: Ewan McGregor (left) and Hayden Christensen, after their Toys "R" Us run.

release of a 1993 live video compilation includes blistering takes on "Cherub Rock" and "I Am One" from the band's 1993-1994 world tour. Each live segment is woven in with fan testimonials, bemused interviews with the foreign press and skits in which a pre-chrome-domed Billy Corgan and the other Pumpkins visit a therapist to discuss their band's very real interpersonal tension: a telling moment, given their storied dysfunction.

ROB KEMP

SPIDER-MAN

COLUMBIA TRISTAR HOME VIDEO

★★★★

Tobey Maguire — Tobey Maguire — does whatever a spider can, but director Sam Raimi does what nobody thought possible: He made a blockbuster with real heart. True, the *Evil Dead* auteur has wanted to take on Spidey since the days when his special-effects budget was limited to a bucket of pig intestines, but it's still remarkable that he manages to turn what might have been yet another by-the-numbers superhero-comic adaptation into such a warm, funny movie replete with thrills, spills and Kirsten Dunst in a wet T-shirt. This two-disc set also boasts a "record your own commentary" option.

STAR WARS: EPISODE II — ATTACK OF THE CLONES

CBS/FOX HOME VIDEO

★

It's better than *The Phantom Menace*, but less pleasant than, say, being forcibly cavity-searched. The main problem with *Clones* is not, strangely, its rotten title, witless script or simple-minded (yet oddly confusing) plot. No, its main problem is George Lucas's decision to cast as the young Anakin

Skywalker — a.k.a. Darth Vader — the completely hopeless Hayden Christensen, an actor who manages to supply his character with less emotion than if he were indeed already wearing that big black mask. Includes commentary from Lucas.

THE YOUNG ONES

BBC VIDEO

★★★

A surreal, Python-esque addition to MTV's '80s schedules, *The Young Ones* remains the only sitcom ever to feature Britain's ska-pop band Madness savagely beating a bunch of hapless extras. And while these tales of foulmouthed, unhygienic college life haven't aged well visually, the scripts still zing with bizzarro non sequiturs ("Do you think ants go to discos?"), post-modern interjections ("Back to the acting!") and a good deal of general, hilariously pointless abuse ("Wimp! Perv! Knob-end!").

NEIL YOUNG: RUST NEVER SLEEPS

SANCTUARY

★★★★

Directed by Neil Young under his preferred pseudonym (Bernard Shakey), this excellent film of a 1978 concert at San Francisco's Cow Palace preserves the moment when Young turned from a hippie also-ran into the punk movement's weird uncle. *Rust Never Sleeps* spans solo acoustic reveries ("Sugar Mountain") to the full-bore electric thunder of his most famous backing band, Crazy Horse ("My My, Hey Hey"). And it's fun to see Young's apparent *Star Wars* obsession manifest itself in the goofy Jawa outfits worn by his roadies (or, in his parlance, "road-eyes")

ROB KEMP

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The Italian Job: Michael Caine, sexy beast



The other guys always got Peter Criss to sweet-talk their way out of parking tickets.

BATTY!

In the old days, Kiss were crazy! By John Harris

KISS: THE EARLY YEARS

Photographs by Waring Abbott
Text by Gene Simmons and Paul Stanley

THREE RIVERS PRESS, \$25

★★★★

➤➤ IF EVER A reunion tour dealt a death blow to a band's magic, it was Kiss's 1996 resurrection of its classic lineup. The spectacle of middle-aged flesh squeezed into spandex and smeared in greasepaint made it easy to forget that, between 1974 and 1980, Kiss stood for rock music at its most gonzo.

Thankfully, you need only two things to be transported back to better days: a copy of 1976's *Destroyer* album, and a copy of *Kiss: The Early Years*. Photographer Waring Abbott was prescient enough to befriend the band when their kabuki-meets-blues-rock shtick was still in the R&D stage, and he remained on the bus as everything started to kick in.



Abbott captured Kiss's early attempts to get noticed (parading through Central Park in their glitter-ghoul glory), and the more surreal aspects of their early success. In 1975, the town of Cadillac, Michigan, greeted the touring band as visiting royalty and encouraged residents to wear Kiss makeup. Abbott even caught the mayor getting in on the act.

Equally delightful are Gene Simmons and Paul Stanley's contributions. Stanley, in particular, seems to be admirably untouched by irony: "If a picture's worth a thousand words, we were trying to fill a dictionary," he notes. And: "When in doubt, show skin! I had reached a point where I realized that a hairy chest, to most females, was hot." And the clincher: "Am I a ham? No, I'm the whole pig."

Not that Simmons is a verbal slouch. His best thoughts cover the band's early-'80s decline, when Kiss cut their hair, changed costumes and released a very uncharacteristic single — cowritten by Lou Reed, of all people — called "A World Without Heroes." "The video ended with a closeup of my face, a single tear running down my cheek," Simmons says. "Bad idea. Demons don't cry."

"I realized that a hairy chest, to most females, was hot."

BANG YOUR HEAD THE RISE AND FALL OF HEAVY METAL

By David Konow

★★★ THREE RIVERS PRESS, \$14

Last year, Mötley Crüe's bacchanalian oral history, *The Dirt*, defiled the top of the bestseller lists, and journalist David Konow's primer joins the metal-book boomlet that

followed. Konow's definition of metal is fairly narrow: *Bang Your Head* overlooks its origins (the Kinks, '50s distortion innovator Link Wray), and he dismissively relegates rap-metal to a passing reference on the final page. *Bang* documents metal's evolution from an outlet for Britain's industrial working class (Black Sabbath, Judas Priest) to the soundtrack for horny American teens (Mötley Crüe, Van Halen), but Konow's clinical prose seems better suited to discussing Gregorian chants.

ROB KEMP

BAT CHAIN PULLER ROCK AND ROLL IN THE AGE OF CELEBRITY

By Kurt Loder

★★★ COOPER SQUARE PRESS, \$17

Before he became MTV's newsreader, Kurt Loder was a music journalist, and this reissue of his 1990 interview collection functions as an '80s time warp. There's Mick Jagger before he married Jerry Hall, and Laurie Anderson before she teamed up with Lou Reed. Old-schoolers already know the fates of Loder's subjects —



whether death (Frank Zappa) or superstardom (Bruce Springsteen) — but his access in an age before spin control reveals him as a surprisingly emotional writer. Still, he might have put a little more effort and insight into his hasty, tacked-on intro ("And Prince, well, what can one say about Prince?").

MARCELLE KARP

LED ZEPPELIN

Photographs by Neal Preston

★★★★ VISION ON PUBLISHING, \$30

Neal Preston, given wide access to Led Zeppelin in their mid-'70s prime, caught the excessive band from all angles. His most arresting moments are his off-duty shots of drummer John

Bonham in conference with hefty band manager Peter Grant, looking like movie villains planning a heist, and a platform-shoed Jimmy Page and bare-chested Robert Plant recuperating in an anonymous Midwestern dressing room. Preston caught it all: power, mystery and the nipple hair of the gods.

DANIEL KRAUSS



Gee, Robert Plant's hair smells terrific!

Blender Approved

The best books of the last three months



EGO TRIP'S BIG BOOK OF RACISM

BY THE EDITORS OF EGO TRIP

REGANBOOKS

Celebrate the hate! The '90s hip-hop zine returns with a hilarious (honest!) look at racism in pop culture.



DA CAPO BEST MUSIC WRITING 2002

EDITED BY JONATHAN LETHEM

DA CAPO PRESS

Jay-Z, Radiohead, N.E.R.D. and the black crater of September 11 — 29 moving articles on the year in music.

LYNYRD SKYNYRD REMEMBERING THE FREE BIRDS OF SOUTHERN ROCK

By Gene Odom with Frank Dorman

★★★★ BROADWAY BOOKS, \$23

There are tough jobs, and there are tough jobs. And then there's Gene Odom's job: handling Lynyrd Skynyrd's security. Odom, a childhood pal of Skynyrd frontman Ronnie Van Zant, recounts in his updated memoir how he tried to keep the band out of trouble at their '70s peak



—no small task, given their short fuses and love for the demon drink. (Guitarist Gary Rossington's motto: "If you ain't pukin', you ain't high.") If not the world's best rock memoir, *Lynyrd Skynyrd* is surely one of the more heartfelt.

And Odom's firsthand recollection of the band's horrific 1977 plane crash — "Phosphorus from a flare melted the side of my head and liquefied my left eye" — goes far beyond harrowing.

CLARK COLLIS

E.A.R.L. THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF DMX

As told to Smokey D. Fontaine

★★★★ HARPERENTERTAINMENT, \$25

Don't question DMX's street cred. Yes, he's sold 13 million copies of his four number 1 albums, but Earl Simmons grew up in a Yonkers, New York, housing project, sharing his blanket with cigar-size roaches and hungry mice. By age 10, he was pathologically violent, setting fire to his juvie hall and trying to kill a



classmate during art class. Fortunately, he also discovered he could rhyme, and in 1998, DMX (who took his name from a drum machine) became hip-hop's gritty antidote to Puff Daddy's butter-soft glitz.

Smokey D. Fontaine captures X's gruff cadence in this suspenseful memoir, as his subject recounts mug-gings, beat-downs and car thefts without regret or apology for his wicked ways. (Don't worry; he finds God at the end.)

JONAH WEINER

WE'RE DESPERATE THE PUNK ROCK PHOTOGRAPHY OF JIM JOCY

★★★★ POWERHOUSE BOOKS, \$30

In the late '70s, in a seedy West Coast alley, an unnamed punk in a tight leather jacket, hot-pink shirt with cufflinks, congressional power tie and Gary Glitter pompadour posed for photographer Jim Jocy. This kid and 200 fellow misfits in mismatched clothes and facial expressions populate *We're Desperate*, Jocy's highly entertaining and charmingly unfussy stash of photos, grimy with clashing colors, taken in Los Angeles and San Francisco



between 1978 and 1980. Strikingly, the mad scramble of leather, cowboy boots and trench coats here would look right at home at any retro-cool gig by the Hives or Interpol — they're dated only by portraits of Iggy Pop and X's Exene Cervenka that Jocy manages to sneak into this otherwise anonymous rogues' gallery.

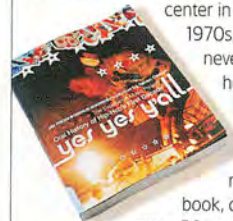
MARC WEINGARTEN

YES YES Y'ALL THE EXPERIENCE MUSIC PROJECT ORAL HISTORY OF HIP-HOP'S FIRST DECADE

Edited by Jim Fricke and Charlie Ahearn

★★★★ DA CAPO PRESS, \$35

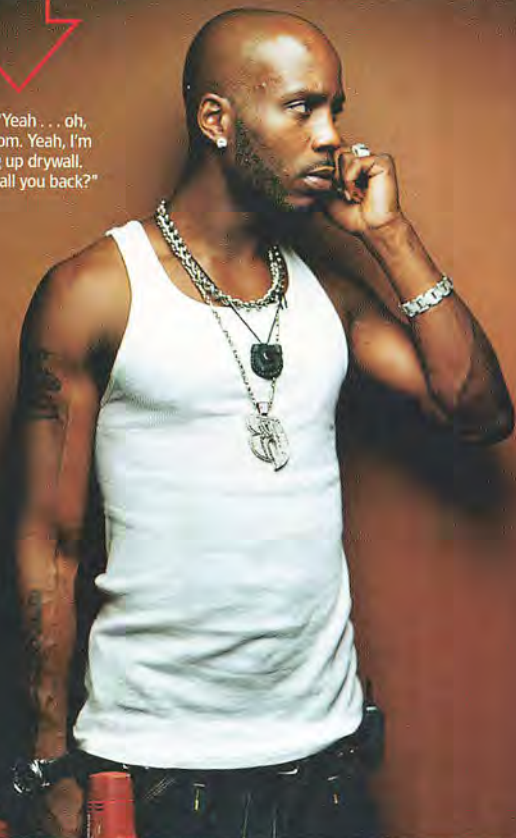
When Kool Herc first DJ'd his sister's party at a South Bronx community center in the early 1970s, he probably never imagined he'd be immortalized in this rich, reverential book, developed some 30 years later by



Seattle's Experience Music Project museum. Editors Jim Fricke, who conducted *Yes Yes Y'all's* interviews, and Charlie Ahearn, who directed the 1982 rapumentary *Wild Style*, amass old-school photos and flyers (LADIES FREE BEFORE 10 P.M. — NO WEAPONS) and talk to rap's pioneers about everything from New York gangs to hip-hop's evolving commerciality. And the original players, like Fab 5 Freddy, Grandmaster Caz, the Rock Steady Crew and Grand Wizard Theodore, who invented the scratch, supply *Y'all's* rich chorus.

MILES MARSHALL LEWIS

DMX: "Yeah... oh, hey, Mom. Yeah, I'm putting up drywall. Can I call you back?"



THE BEST PART OF A BIG BOOK!

DMX slurps an entire bottle of Hennessy and staggers out of a New York bar with his wife, Tashera, and his dawgs, Kato and Hip. Next thing they know, some fool's threatening to blow their heads off...

>> KATO AND HIP got out of their car and dragged me out of my truck onto the pavement. Then they carried me inside after him.

My man was there waiting for me. He was wearing a long gray coat and underneath I could see that he had on a bulletproof vest.

Immediately, he started talking greasy to Tashera. "Your boyfriend robbed me, girl, and see, I ain't trying to let that shit slide..."

"Yo, that's my fucking wife, nigga. You can't be serious. I'll fucking kill you!"

That's when he pulled out. It was a nice-size gun, black with a long barrel. I think it was a .357

and he had it pointed right at me.

Now Karate Kato was given that name for a reason, so anybody who knew what they were doing with a piece would have shot him first, and Hip was a thorough nigga but not a killer, so I knew that this was not a good situation. But as soon as that coward pointed that piece at me, without thinking about what I was doing, I just grabbed the gun right out of his hand. Before he had a chance to say a word, I just snatched it from him and got an attitude. He didn't get off a shot.

"What the fuck is you doing? I robbed you already, nigga, you're a bitch!"

"Without thinking what I was doing, I grabbed the .357 right out of his hand."

Excerpted from the book *E.A.R.L.: The Biography of DMX*. Copyright © 2002 by Earl Simmons and Smokey D. Fontaine. Published by Harper-Entertainment, an imprint of Harper-Collins Publishers, Inc. Reprinted with permission.



"What did I tell you about bothering the guests, Great-great-great Grandpa?"

OOZEFEST!

The rotting, maggot-covered corpses are back. And boy, are they mad! By Alex Porter

RESIDENT EVIL ZERO

CAPCOM — GAMECUBE

★★★★

DEADSY!

Video games' all-time most disgusting deaths

1 BOIL AND BUBBLE!
Extermination: Giant bile-spewing leeches leave you with deadly throbbing boils. *Ecch!*

2 MOMMMMY!
The Lost: Get torn to pieces by a mummy with three heads — that's three human baby heads.

3 STABBED!
Silent Hill: Get sliced and diced by skinless, knife-wielding tots.

4 BADA-BING!
Grand Theft Auto 3: Shotgun blasts leave victims gushing blood like Italian fountains.

5 SPINELESS!
Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance: Rip out your opponent's backbone as a tasteful trophy.

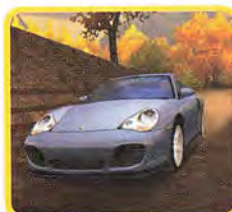
➤ IT'S THE DEAD of night. You're a rookie cop, sneaking through the creaky, shadowy cars of a runaway passenger train. There's a thud, and you spin around to face mind-bending horror: not a mere cleaver-wielding lunatic, but a mottled, rotting corpse infested with leeches, slithering out of the oozing flesh and crawling toward you.

It's tough to handle a game controller when you're screaming — and that's why the terrifying Resident Evil has become one of the most popular video game series in history. For six years, the survival-horror franchise's sequels, prequels, imitators and horror-movie spin-offs have spread like so many anthrax spores. And just as Godzilla tapped into Japan's atomic fears, Resident Evil scares the bejeezus out of anyone suffering bioterrorism nightmares today.

Resident Evil Zero, the series' seventh game, ratchets up the fear factor. Play begins with plucky, naive

officer Rebecca Chambers investigating a crashed chopper. She joins Billy, an escaped con, to board a runaway train crammed with walking corpses. Keeping two characters safe from mutated insects and undead amphibians lurking behind unopened doors magnifies the pressure of most games: Rebecca and Billy supply the weaponry and skills, but their cool, quick-thinking strategies and responses are entirely up to you.

A few hangovers persist from the previous Resident Evil game. Its confusing plot is explained through letters, journals and cheesy dialogue that often raises the question "What the hell's going on here?" But Zero gets most details right, such as the undead's genesis as the by-product of an evil Enron-esque corporation. And its stunning visuals, eerie noises and nerve-jangling suspense are sure to keep you wide awake at night. As if your bioterrorism nightmares weren't enough.



NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2

ELECTRONIC ARTS — PS2, GAMECUBE, XBOX, PC

A cops-and-robbers game — take your pick which side you're driving on. Dodge traffic, blast through barricades and roar down byways (or off-road shortcuts) in graphically sharp, exotic environments and fantasy wheels. Plenty of mindless car carnage for the high-octane play. ★★★★★



WHITEOUT

KONAMI — PS2, XBOX, PC

Not an office-supply adventure, but a SnoCross racing game on wintry sleds. Play one of six real-life pro snowmobilers (not that we recognize their names), executing loopy tricks and slalom courses in downtown Moscow (and the "Tundra Dome"). Sadly, loose controls and the been-there-sledded-that concept are about as tasty as a salted ice rink. ★★



SHENMUE II

MICROSOFT — XBOX

The second game in a cinematic series set in the 1980s. You're Ryo, on a mission to China to avenge your father's death. Part Hong Kong melodrama, part mystery: Every character and painstakingly detailed object is open to your scrutiny. Some martial-arts combat heightens the pace — but patience most necessary. Grasshoppa. ★★★



STAR WARS JEDI KNIGHT II — JEDI OUTCAST

LUCASARTS — GAMECUBE, XBOX, PC

It's worth a spin even if you don't give a wookiee's ass for Star Wars. Run around unpronounceable locales icing Stormtroopers and other nasties with a light saber. Multi-player combat taps the Force for some tight action, but design flaws in the lame puzzles give in to the Dark Side. ★★★

Blender Approved

The best games of the last three months



THE SIMS ONLINE

ELECTRONIC ARTS — PC

Play as your virtual alter ego, drinking, screwing and gobbling Quarter Pounders in the human zoo — with thousands of other actual players.



NHL HITZ 2003

MIDWAY — PS2, XBOX, GAMECUBE

Detailed hockey action (or DIY Ice Capades) with teams consisting of cowboys, zombies or gladiators. Strange. Disturbing. Totally awesome.

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PlayStation®2

tick

tick

tick

tick

tick

boom!

Push any good guy too far, eventually he's gonna make some bad things happen. Ex-cop Jack Slate is no exception. But when he explodes, things are going to be worse than you can ever imagine. So be sure to watch your backs, thugs. Your time's running out.



Blood
Mature Sexual Themes
Violence



Dead to Rights

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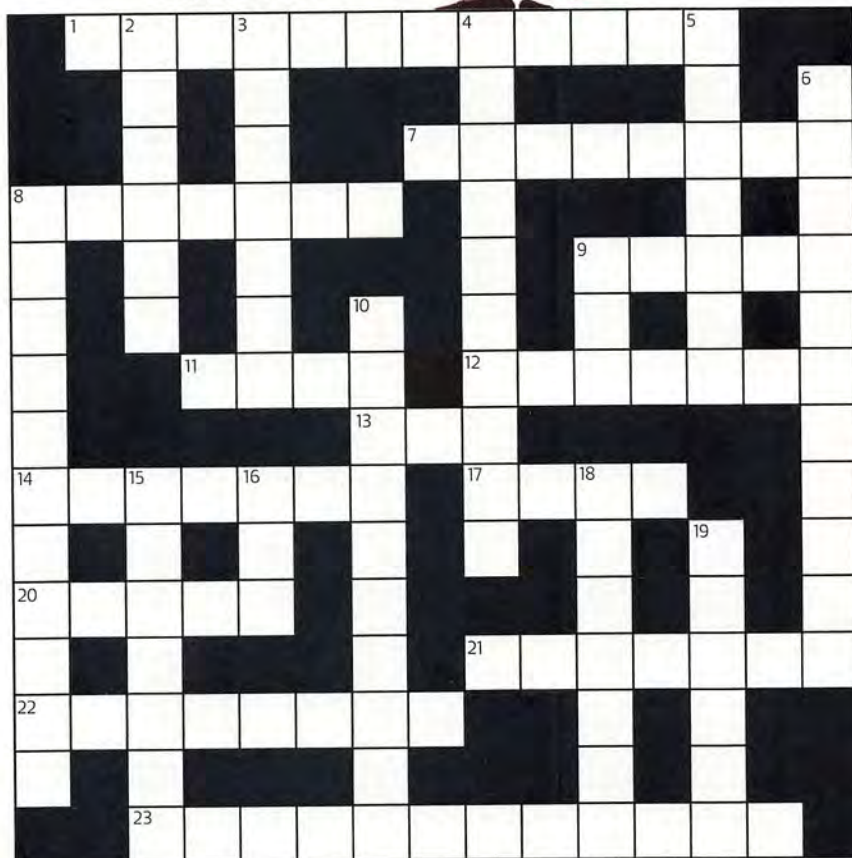
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➤ **SWEET!** It's a free XM Sky Fi Satellite Radio, transmitting 100 diverse channels including electronica, classic alternative, reggae, you name it. XM won't lose its signal, at home or on the road, and it doesn't even need installation — it plugs right in. Just solve this puzzle, read the official rules at blender.com, cut out your completed version and send it to Blender Puzzle Contest, 1040 Avenue of the Americas, 22nd floor, New York, New York 10018. Make sure we get your answer and contact information by December 17, 2002. We'll choose a winner at random from correct entries received, and post each XM Radio winner's name (and the solution to the previous puzzle) at blender.com/crossword. Nice...



PENCIL ME IN!

Yo, it's *Blender's* crossword!
Starring 23 Across!
BY BRENDAN QUIGLEY



ACROSS

- 1 He and his self-named jam band peddle "busted stuff" (two words)
- 7 Turn on the bright lights to see this gloomy new NYC band
- 8 Carl, who sang "Blue Suede Shoes"
- 9 "Sixty-eight guns will never die!" — '80s battle cry of the _____
- 11 Leader of the bluegrass-jazz Flecktones
- 12 The black mountain hills of Dakota were home to Rocky _____
- 13 Trent Reznor's band, as abbreviated on T-shirts
- 14 Where N.W.A came straight outta

- 17 Mid-'90s heartthrob and head Lemonhead, _____ Dando
- 20 He's going down, down, baby, your street in a Range Rover
- 21 Back in the day, they were called the Quarrymen
- 22 Ass-shakin' rapper, a.k.a. Michael Taylor
- 23 Canadian singer who doesn't like things "complicated" (two words)

DOWN

- 2 One-named R&B chanteuse with the 2002 hit "Why Don't We Fall in Love"
- 3 Son of Julio
- 4 What's love got to do with her? (two words)

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1. Outside-County as stated on Form 3541	8,522	9,457
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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.
(Signed) Stephen Colvin, President.

- 5 Gangster Tony, or diva Kiri Te Kanawa
- 6 "She Don't Use Jelly": '90s single by these Oklahoma weirdos (two words)
- 8 Professor Griff's power-fighting outfit (two words)
- 9 When Smokey sings, he thinks of these quirky '80s Brits
- 10 The Breeders' 1993 blast
- 15 "Yes I Am" the winner of a Grammy for best female rock vocalist!
- 16 Classic song: "_____ a Little Tenderness"
- 18 First this singer was foolish — now she's happy
- 19 Comic who lampoons Alanis, Eminem and Jagger on *Saturday Night Live*



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She's the 20-year-old "everyday, normal girl" from Texas who wowed the 28 million viewers of *American Idol*. But did they know that she hates wearing underwear and steadfastly denies drinking her own pee? They do now, as she tackles the question...

BY ROB TANNENBAUM
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOSEPH CULTICE

WHO DOES KELLY CLARKSON THINK SHE IS?

So what did you draw?

I drew my friends and my parents. That's the most important thing to me, other than God.

You didn't do a very good job, huh?
No. They're stick people. I can't draw!

What did your third-grade report card say?

I used to get *N* for Needs Improvement or *U* for Unsatisfactory because I talked so much. I wouldn't shut up. I'm very ADHD [Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder].

If you could change one thing about your body, what would it be?

My big booty. I have the biggest butt. It's just not right. It's hard to shop for pants — they'll fit me perfectly in the butt, but then the waist is four inches too big. I'm Greek, so we have pretty big booties in my family.

Is there a specific song that always gets stuck in your head?

That No Doubt song, "I'm just a girl, blah-blah-blah-blah-blah." Or Aerosmith's "Rag Doll."

It's hard to hear any Aerosmith influence in your singing.

I like all different styles of music. My favorite band is the Toadies. They're completely alternative. I went to see Limp Bizkit.

Do you mosh?

Oh, God, body surfing is one of my favorite things. It's cool when you come home with bruises.

What are you like when you're drunk?

I'm not allowed to drink because of my vocal cords, and I'm also 20. But I have had a couple of shots. Liquor smells like crap. I hate when people say, "It's an acquired taste." Because I could acquire a taste for pee, but I don't drink pee.

Well, that eliminates our next question. What's your biggest vice?

I'm sorry, what's my what? I don't even know what that is, dude.

A vice is a bad habit.

OK. Talk to me like I'm 4 years old [laughs]. I am a hygiene

freak. I'm obsessive-compulsive when it comes to washing hands.

What about public toilets?

Oh, my God! I wrap the toilet with paper — it's a five-minute process. Nothing on my skin is going to touch the toilet. People could have, like, nasty butt. And I do *not* use Porta-Potties.

A related question: Underwear, or no underwear?

I am commando girl. Why in the world would you want a little thing up your butt when you can go free?

When you were crowned American Idol on national TV, you weren't wearing underwear?

Nope. I swear, all my friends in Texas go commando, too.

That'll help boost tourism. Have you ever been mistaken for someone famous?

Last year I was in Los Angeles, and my hair was ironed straight. All of a sudden, these Chinese people started running after me with cameras, going "Jennifer! Jennifer!" They thought I was Jennifer Aniston. I don't think I look anything like her,

though, because she's hot.

You don't think you're hot?

Oh, no. I'm cute — and God, I hate that. Because that's not cool. I'm like your niece. Nobody wants to date someone's niece. It's the chubby cheeks. The whole reason people voted for me on *American Idol* is because I'm an everyday, normal girl.

Would they have voted for you if they had known you weren't wearing panties?

Oh, my God. I don't think it would have mattered. [BLENDER]



“I have the biggest butt!”

TOP BY FOLEY AND
CORINA; PANTS BY H&M;
BOOTS BY NINE WEST

Shot on location at Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum, NYC. Makeup: Aniele Marice-Bryne using Vincent Longo. Hair: Giannandrea at Independent.com for Kiehls. Wardrobe styling: Adri Johnson at Independent.com



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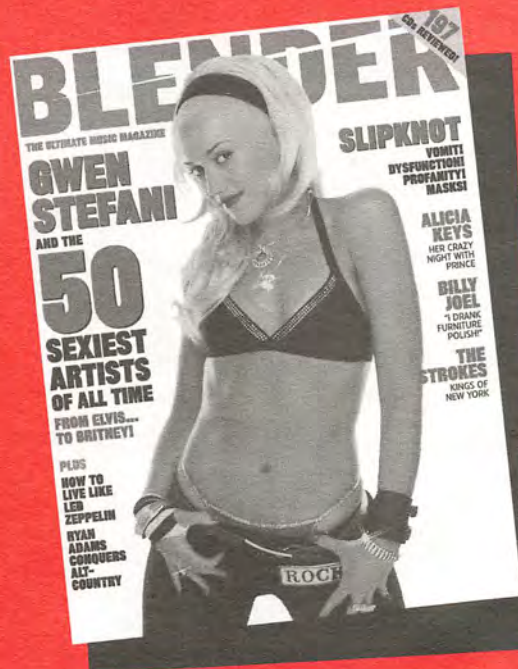
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